

BIRDWATCHERS' FIELD CLUB OF BANGALORE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BIRDWATCHERS' FIELD CLUB OF BANGALORE
HELD ON SUNDAY, THE 29TH SEPTEMBER 1991, AT LALBAGH, TO DISCUSS
ABOUT THE MODALITIES OF THE MID-WINTER WATERFOWL CENSUS - 1992.

BIRDWATCHERS PRESENT :- Mr. Anand Sampath, Mr. A.K. Raju, Mr. T.S. Srinivasa, Dr. S. Subramanya, U. Harish Kumar, Dr. B. K. Chakrapani, Mr. M.B. Krishna, Mr. O.C. Naveen, Mr. J. Hemanth, Mr. Subramanya Dikshitalu, Mr. Shamal, Mr. Leo. F. Saldanha, Mr. Santhamano-har.

BIRDWATCHERS ABSENT :- Mr. J.N. Prasad, Mr. S. Karthikeyan, Mr. Jayanth, Mr. Ratna Mohan, Mr. Praveen Karanth, Mr. Sukesh, Mr. B.A. Sridhara, Mr. Madhusudhan, Mr. Srinivasan, Dr. Joseph George.

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1. Letters from the Forest Department were read out to the group.
2. Regarding manpower assessment, the birdwatchers indicated in general when they would be free in January 1992. Some indicated that they would be free on weekdays, some on weekends and some on holidays. The confirmation would be available only by the end of December.
3. Regarding wetlands coverage in other districts (Mysore, Tumkur, Kolar, Mandya, etc) some birdwatchers expressed their willingness to go to other district headquarters and address a joint group of local NGOs and Forest Department officials. Points on conducting the census and also identifying waterfowl would be discussed at the meetings. Some of our birdwatchers would also be helping them out during the census.
4. The group decided that the census would be conducted extensively only if the Forest Department provided transport and that the group would not engage any private transport and handle finances.

The meeting terminated at 11.15 am.

(After the meeting, the birdwatchers met Mr. Yellappa Reddy at his residence and appraised him about the developments)

KRM 13/10/91
for BWFCB.

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BIRDPWATCHERS' FIELD CLUB OF BANGALORE
13, 2nd'A'CrS, 7th Mn, KSRTC Layout, JP Nagar 2nd Phase, Bangalore-78.

MERLIN NATURE CLUB
13, 8th Cross, 30th Main, JP Nagar 1st Phase, Bangalore - 560 078.

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* * * WISH YOU HAPPY BIRDING '98 * * *

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MID-WINTER WATERFOWL CENSUS - 1998

As you may be aware, Waterbird Count is being carried out at the lakes in and around Bangalore every January for the past eleven years. We are now in the 12th year of the Count. The following is the proposed counting schedule. Would you be interested in counting the waterbirds this year? If so, please co-ordinate with the co-ordinator of that particular day at the phone numbers listed below. Please note that the counting will last the whole day. So, get your own food, water, binoculars, field guide and cap. Your own transport will be necessary. Motivation is essential (again one's own !!).

Jan 4th, Sun : Hesarghatta Tank ; Meet at Bharat Electronics Ltd (BEL) circle ; 8.00 am ; Co-ordinator : Mr.L.Shyamal, Tel.: 347 3692.

Jan 11th, Sun : Tailur Tank, Maddur ; Meet at City Railway Stn. at 6.30 am, on Mysore Train platform after buying your ticket to Maddur (to board the Mysore Train leaving at 7 am) ; Co-ordinator : Mr.U.Harish Kumar, Tel.: 665 5818. / ~~MB~~

Jan 14th, Wed : Thippagondana Halli Reservoir (T.G.Halli) ; Meet at the junction of Magadi Road and Chord Road at 8.00 am. Co-ordinators : Mr.N.R.Swamy, Tel.: 628 067 and Mr.L.Shyamal, Tel.:347 3692.

Jan 18th, Sun : Hoskote Tank ; Meet at Hoskote Tank Bund at 8.00 am (off 27th Km on Old Madras Rd); Co-ordinator: Mr.Hemanth, Tel.:6614278

Jan 25th Sun : Byramangala Reservoir ; Meet at Banashankari Temple on Kanakapura Rd.at 7.30 am, Co-ordinator: Mr.J.N.Prasad, Tel.:6644682

Jan 26th Mon : Varthur/Bellandur Tanks ; Meet at entrance of Airport on the Main Rd at 8 am ; Co-ordinator: Mr.U.Harish Kumar, Tel.:6655818

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Quiz : Answer to December Quiz - The bird which migrates to S.India (including Bangalore) from Africa just before the monsoon is THE PIED CRESTED CUCKOO - Prize winner is Mr.Arvind Venkatadri.

Quizzzzzz....for January '98

Name any two migratory warblers which visit Bangalore during winter. (Prize is sponsored by Mr.Pratap Surana of Nature Tours & Travels).

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WE REQUEST YOU TO SEND IN YOUR MINIMUM DONATION (RS.25/- PER ANNUM) TO ENABLE US TO COVER UP XEROX & POSTAGE EXPENSES FOR MAILING BIRDPWATCHING INTIMATIONS. ALSO, PLEASE RENEW YOUR SUBSCRIPTION (RS.50/-PER ANNUM) FOR 1998 FOR "MERLIN" QUARTERLY WHICH IS IN ITS TENTH YEAR. PAYMENTS MAY BE MADE BY CHEQUE/DD/MO FVG."MERLIN NATURE CLUB" (FOR OUTSTATION CHEQUES PLEASE ADD RS.15/- TOWARDS BANK CHARGES.

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U.Harish Kumar (home tel: 665 5818) J.N.Prasad (home tel: 664 4682)

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Nov 08 (2nd Sun): Birdwatching at Bannerghatta National Park. Assemble at the new ticket counter by 8.00 am. Outing will last for about 4 hours. Camouflage dress and shoes is must. Avoid Bright colours and perfume.

Nov 22 (4th Sun): Nature trail at Badamanavarthe State Forest, assemble at 3.00 pm outside the Valley school gate off 17th km Kanakapura road. This evening outing will last for 4 hours well into darkness.

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Answer to Oct '98 Quiz:

In most of the birds where male and female of a species, can easily be identified by the colours, it is usually the male, which is more colourful. The reason is simple - typically the male needs to woo the female .. so a more attractive display of itself can win attention. When the the nestlings/eggs are being looked after (usually by the female) in most cases, the female needs to blend with the surroundings so that it doesn't attract attention. However, an exception in Painted Snipe, it is the female who is more colourful as she is poly androus & it is the duty of the drab coloured male to incubate and take care of the young ones. By the way, has this species disappeared from Bangalore ? Prize winner: R.Aravind

Quizzzzz for Nov '98:

Name the author of Book of Indian Animals and the series Catwatching, Man-watching, Naked Ape, Human Zoo, Bodywatching, Human nestbuilders etc.

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Watch for these trees in bloom: Yellow Dolly, Noble Amherstia, Potato Tree, Temple tree, Copper pod, Colville's Glory, Purple Bauhinia, Cannon Ball tree, Bottle Brush, Tulip tree, Siam Cassia, Spectacular Cassia and Indian Cork Tree (usually a tall tree with fragrant white dangling flowers)

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**Pelican update:** Spot-billed Pelicans have started arriving at Kokkre Bellur to continue their annual ritual of building nests and raising the young, in this remarkable village, where they are nesting in so close quarters to the human inhabitation. This species is barely managing to survive, despite heavy pollution of tanks and rivers with pesticides and pressures on the few surviving trees for fuel wood & fodder. Inspite of fighting a losing battle to help save this species, pioneering efforts of Dr.S.Subramanya in designing and erecting an artificial platform for these pelicans is really commendable. Three years ago a platform was erected at the Bannerghatta National Park aviary by him with the permission of the Karnataka Forest Department, who had least hope that it would work. It paid results last year with two nest being built and young ones had successfully fledged out. This year again there are five nests on this platform. We hope Forest department shall agree to our requests to expand this captive breeding programme, to successfully breed more of this endangered species for releasing in to the wild. Volunteers who are willing to help in projects such as these may please contact Dr.Subramanya.

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Operation Magpie Robin: Second phase of this nest box project is being chalked out. Magpie Robins need more volunteers, material and monetary support. Are are the birdwatchers not listening to their alarm call?

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BIRDING NOTES Compiled by Aasheesh Pittie

This column publishes birding notes in brief telegraphic form, from Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra & Tamil Nadu on interesting and significant sightings and behaviour like breeding, feeding, migration, nesting, etc. Notes on flowering and fruiting trees and their relationship with birds are also welcome. English names and classification follow, S.D. Ripley's *A Synopsis of the Birds of India and Pakistan* (1982, 2nd ed.) and scientific nomenclature, T. Inskipp, N. Lindsey & W. Duckworth's *An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the Oriental Region* (1996). Unless specified, all observations are for 1998. Abbreviations, Contributors, Notes, Regional Referees, etc., are at the end. For selection of breeding criteria 'Probable, Possible, Confirmed', see Pitta # 82, February 1998, p. 4.

ANDHRA PRADESH**HYDERABAD DISTRICT**

Hyderabad City 9.10

INDIAN PITTA Procured from bird market, ringed and released¹. CB, another, with brood-patch from market, ringed and released (HJ, HT).

MEDAK DISTRICT

ICRISAT Campus (SQ)

MONTAGU'S HARRIER 14.9; MARSH HARRIER: 7.9: 2. 14.9: 7; KESTREL 6.10: 1; WATER COCK 22.8: 1 seen, also hrd calling, rice paddies; PHEASANT-TAILED JACANA 22.8: 1 in rice paddies; GREEN SANDPIPER: 22.8: 1, 28.8: 5 in rice paddies; WOOD SANDPIPER 21.22.8: c. 40 per day; 28.8: c. 20 in rice paddies; RUFF 28.8: 1 in rice paddies; BLACKWINGED STILT 6.10: 5; SANDGROUSE sp? 10-15 overhead; call, a nasal "chur-chur" or "chitur-chitur"; LITTLE BROWN DOVE 10.9: CB, 1 N with 3 eggs; SIRKEER CUCKOO 20.8, 3.9: 1; ASHY SWALLOW SHRIKE 7.9: 7; BAYBACKED SHRIKE 28.9: 14; RUFOUSBACK-ED SHRIKE 28.9; BROWN SHRIKE 28.9: 24; YELLOW-EYED BABBler 28.8: flock, & 1 singing; STREAKED FANTAIL WARBLER 10.9: 2 N, 1 with 5 eggs, & 1 under const.; PLAIN WREN WARBLER 10.9: CB, 2 N with 4 eggs and 4 chicks, resp.; ASHY WREN WARBLER 5.9: CB ad., feeding 4 fledglings. 9.9: CB, 3 N with 4 eggs, 5 eggs and 3 chicks resp.; PURPLERUMPED SUNBIRD 10.9: CB, 1 N with 2 hatchlings; RED MUNIA 5.10: CB, 1 N with 7 eggs; BLACKHEADED MUNIA 23.9: CB, pair in N.

KURNOOL DISTRICT

Rollapadu Great Indian Bustard Sanctuary (KI, SQ, A)

PAINTED STORK: 25.8: 2; SPOTBILL DUCK: 26.8: PRB, 1 flying with broken eggshell & dropping it. Also several seen; MONTAGU'S HARRIER 25.8: 1 M; GREAT INDIAN BUSTARD 17-23.8: entire sanctuary scanned 2 evenings. 9 F, 2 M (1st evening), 5 F, 5 M (2nd); LESSER FLORICAN: 2 M disp.; INDIAN COURSER 24.25.8: c. 50; GREENSHANK 25.8: hrd; COMMON INDIAN NIGHTJAR hrd; BLUETAILED BEE-EATER: 24.8.

RANGAREDDI DISTRICT

A.P. Police Academy 6.9 (AP)

PIED CRESTED CUCKOO; IORA CB, 1 M incubating.

Balarpur (Near Midhani) 10.10 (IJ)

COMMON HAWK-CUCKOO CB, 1 chick being fed by Whiteheaded Babbler! WHITEHEADED BABBler CB, foster parents of Common Hawk-Cuckoo which they were feeding.

Shamirpet Kanchas 11.10 (RM)

JACK SNIPE; MONTAGU'S HARRIER; PALE HARRIER; RED TURTLE-DOVE; SYKES' CRESTED LARK; BLACK REDSTART

GOA**NORTH GOA DISTRICT**

Chapora River (Mouth of the) 18.8 (HL)

HERRING GULL 1 ad.; GREAT BLACKHEADED GULL POB, 4 br., plm; WHITEWINGED BLACK TERN moulting into winter plm; GULLBILLED TERN 6; COMMON TERN 1 ad.; ROSEATE TERN POB, 30+ br., plm; WHITECHEEKED TERN 60+, 80% imm.; LITTLE TERN 6+ non-br., plm; LARGE CRESTED TERN POB, 4 br., plm; LESSER CRESTED TERN 60+; SANDWICH TERN 125+ non-br., plm.

MAHARASHTRA**NASHIK DISTRICT (BR, SG, RG)**

Gangapur Dam

BLACK IBIS 16.8: 24. 1 feeding on a Garden Lizard *Calotis versicolor*; SPOONBILL 27.8: PRB, 2 in br., plm; FLAMINGO 2.8: 150; PAINTED PARTRIDGE 5-18.8: PRB, M singing all around; RAIN QUAIL 30.8: PRB, M singing; JUNGLE BUSH QUAIL 30.8: CB, 2 ad., 4 eggs; INDIAN COURSER 12.8: 1 sub-ad.; SYKES' CRESTED LARK 6.8: CB, 2 N, 1 with 2 yng, other with 2 eggs; GREY SHRIKE 8.8: CB, 2 ad., 2 yng. 12.8: 1 feeding on frog (sp.,?); COMMON MYNA 16.8: CB, A pair & 2 yng in N; REDVENTED BULBUL 28.8: CB, 1 pair, 3 yng; STREAKED FANTAIL WARBLER 12.8: CB, 1 ad., 3 eggs. 14.8: 3 yng. Chick hatching to flt 16 days; PLAIN WREN-WARBLER 24.8: CB, 1 N with 4 eggs. 25.8: CB, 1 N with 1 egg. 27.8: 1 N with 3 eggs. All N in Parthenium weeds!

MUMBAI DISTRICT

Goregaon (IGIDR Campus)

RED SPURFOWL 16,18.9: Hrd (AP); IORA 18.9: CB. Pair feeding 1 yng (MBK); SPOTTED BABBler 16,18.9: 3; ASHY PRINIA 16.9: CB: 1 ad., feeding 3 yng (SS).

ABBREVIATIONS: Ab-abundant; ad-adult/s; br-breeding; C-common/ly; CB-confirmed breeding; const-construction/ing; c.-approximately; disp-display/ing; F-female; flt-flight; fly-family; freq-frequently; hrd-heard; id-identified; imm-immature; inc-include/ing; Is-Island; juv-juvenile; LM-local migrant; M-male; mat-material; N-nest/ing/s; POB-possible breeding; PRB-probable breeding; plm-plumage; RF-Reserve Forest; Resp-respectively; Tlk-Taluk; vil-village; WL-wildlife; yng-young

CONTRIBUTORS: Adisheshaiah (A), A Pittie (AP); B Raha (BR); H Lainer (HL); K Isvaran (KI); MB Krishna (MBK); R Gadgil (RG); R Mathew (RM); S Gudsoorkar (SG); S Quader (SQ); S Subramanya (SS);

NOTES:

¹ BNHS ring # AB-147502. Contact BSAP for further details.

REGIONAL REFEREES: Andhra Pradesh: A Pittie; Goa: H Lainer; Karnataka: JN Prasad; Kerala: PO Nameer; Maharashtra: N Jamdar; Tamil Nadu: V Santharam.

For Private Circulation Only

For more information write to: Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh, PO Box 45, Banjara Hills PO, Hyderabad 500034, India.

Illustration: page 3 - Varunika Saraf. Note: Dr Kumar Ghorpade's Letter will be resumed next month.

Editors: Aasheesh Pittie (3350683) & Siraj A Taher (3352607)

Membership (Rs): Admission=20; Ordinary=100, Student=25 per annum; Life=1,000. E-mail: AASHEESH@HDI.VSNI.NET.IN

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BIRDWATCHING DISCIPLINE DEMANDS CARRYING A NOTE PAD & PEN FOR TAKING FIELD NOTES; WEARING DULL COLOURED CLOTHES WHICH MERGE WITH THE GREENERY; BEING OBSERVANT BY KEEPING YOUR EYES & EARS OPEN; URGE TO LEARN & UNDERSTAND THE SECRETS OF NATURE BY PATIENCE, PERSEVERENCE & MORE IMPORTANTLY BY MAINTAINING ABSOLUTE SILENCE IN THE FIELD. MOTIVATION IS PREREQUISITE.

=====

BIRDWATCHING PROGRAMMES IN MARCH 1998

March 8th, Sunday : Tailur Tank, Maddur ; Meet at City Railway Stn. at 6.30 am, on Mysore Train platform after buying your ticket to Maddur (to board Kauvery Express leaving at 7 am) ; Carry food & water. The outing lasts for the whole day. Contact Mr.U.Harish Kumar on 6655818.

March 22nd, Sunday : Nandi Hills ; Meet at Majestic-opp.Sangam Theatre at 6.30 am. Transport is arranged on first-come-first-serve basis. Last date for registration with full payment of Rs.120/- per head is 15th March '98. Carry food/water. Full day outing. Contact Mr.J.N.Prasad on 6644682.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF FEBRUARY '98 OUTING - HOSKOTE TANK

White Stork-19; Grey Pelican-6; Spoonbill-23; White Ibis-19; Black tailed Godwit-40+; Cliff Swallows; Brown headed Gull; Indian River Tern; a courting pair of White breasted Kingfishers. Birdwatchers present - 11.

=====

Quiz : Answer to February '98 Quiz - The Indian bird re-discovered recently after a gap of 113 years is the Forest Spotted Owlet (Blewitt's Owl). And the smallest duck in the world is the Cotton Teal - nick named as "Pygmy Goose". Prize winner is Mr.Arvind Venkatadri.

Quizzzzzz....for March '98 : Name a shrike which winters in Bangalore.

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OPERATION MAGPIE ROBIN

=====

Dr.Joseph George initiated the idea of making nest boxes to attract birds such as Magpie Robin, Grey Tit and other hole-nesting species, since it is now hard to find them within our city limits. The Project is in progress. 58 bamboo nest boxes and 38 wooden nest boxes are ready. A few have already been put up at various sites. Thanks to Dr.Joseph George for providing bamboo sections and also for giving us guidance and motivation. Thanks also to Sqn.Ldr.Ramanath for liberally donating wooden nest boxes for this Project. Birdwatchers are requested to suggest suitable places for putting up nest boxes particularly to encourage Magpie Robins and Grey Tits. We are also thankful to Mr.D.Krishna Mohan and Mrs.S.G.Bharghavi for their partial monetary support for this Project.

=====

Watch for these trees in Bloom in February : Mango, Jacaranda, Yellow Tabebuia, Yellow Dolly, Rain Tree, Moulmein Rose wood (Vidhana Soudha & at the back of Karnataka High Court - new annexure).

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U. Harish Kumar (home tel: 665 5818) J.N. Prasad (home tel: 664 4682)

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May 10 (2nd Sunday): Birdwatching at Badamanavarthe State Forest meet us at 8 am at the Valley School/Silk Research Institute bus stop at 17th km milestone on Kanakapura road. Outing will last for 3 hours.

May 24 (4th Sunday): Nature trail at Cubbon Park, assemble at 7 am at Queen's statue on Kasturba road. Outing will last for 3 hours.

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Answer to April '98 quiz: Name any three birds which make their own nest hole in trees - All Barbets and woodpeckers. Many have answered Parakeets and Hoopoe which is not correct as they are secondary hole nesters and their beaks are not designed for excavating holes. Prize winner: Mr. Vijay Kiyawat.

Quizzzz for May '98:

- 1) Which is the smallest bird in Bangalore
- 2) Name the any three species of birds which practice brood parasitism that is, they lay eggs in another birds nest.

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Operation Magpie Robin: Additional reports of locations of Magpie Robin have been received - Whitefield/Kadugodi, UAS, GKVK, United Theological College campus, Jayamahal.

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Watch for these trees in bloom in May: Mango, Yello Dolly, ChampaK, Potato Tree, Temple tree, Gul Mohur, Copper pod, Pride of India, Purple Bauhinia, Manure tree, Cannon Ball tree and Pink Cassias

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Extract of bird notes from Karnataka from PITTA # 85, May 1998

Monthly Bulletin of the Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh

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KARNATAKA

BANGALORE DISTRICT

Bannerghatta National Park (HS)

SMALL MINIVET 12.9.1997: CB, N with 2 eggs. 20.9.1997: CB, ad., feeding 2 chicks; 26.9.1997: 2 fledgeling (F) flew out of N.; LARGE PIED WAGTAIL 27.3 CB, ad., feeding yng. 12.4 PRB, ad., carrying N-mat., to another site between two rocks in the same area (same pair?); PURPLE-RUMPED SUNBIRD 5.3: CB, N with 2 eggs. Later N destroyed by coucal, which probably ate the eggs; PURPLE SUNBIRD 5.3: CB, N in Eresid sp. spider's colony, ad., feeding yng.

Bangalore City

SMALL GREEN BARBET 3.4: CB, ad., carrying food (JNP); INDIAN MYNA 1.4: PRB, N building on telephone pole (JNP). 7.4: PRB, N building on electric pole.



15.4: PRB, on telephone pole (JNP).; JUNGLE MYNA 15.4: PRB, N building on peepal tree (JNP); HOUSE SPARROW 11.4: CB, N (FS). 13.4 PRB, mating (SK); Kaggalipura: Ramaiah Farm 12.4 (JNP) JUNGLE CROW CB, N.; Lalbagh 12.4 ROSERINGED PARAKEET feeding on Parkia biglandulosa pods (JNP); SMALL GREEN BARBET PRB, 2 N on rain tree; JUNGLE MYNA PRB, carrying N-matl (JNP,UHK); BLUEHEADED ROCK THRUSH 1 F (NRS); LARGE PIED WAGTAIL CB, 2 imm & 1 ad., (JNP,UHK); Ulsoor Tank 9.4 (DJ) LITTLE GREBE 10; CORMORANTS 20+ sp?; PIED KINGFISHER 2 rare in this disturbed & polluted tank; United Theological College PARIKH KITE 10.4: POB, on Ficus benjamina tree (DJ); SPOTTED OWLETS 15.3: roosting, have replaced collared scops owl (?); SMALL GREEN BARBET 19.4: CB, N on gulmohur tree, ad., carrying food (DJ); INDIAN MYNA possible nesting; JUNGLE MYNA CB, 2 N. Ad., carrying food (DJ,JNP); MAGPIE ROBIN 12.4: PRB, F carrying N-matl, M singing (ORK);

Karadikal State Forest (Bannerghatta NP range) 10.4: (JNP, NRS, MBK, MRR) PAINTED SANDGROUSE 1 F, on road-side in scrub forest. New record for Bangalore; Thally Reserve Forest 10.4 (NRS, MBK, NRS, MRR) COMMON IORA PRB, M singing/disp., to F carrying N-matl; MAGPIE ROBIN POB, M singing.

Yedamadu village 27.3-3.4 (HS)

MAGPIE ROBIN CB, N 10 up a papaya tree in chikkoo orchard with 2 yng & 2 unhatched eggs. 2 yng fledged out successfully.

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CONTRIBUTORS: Devcharan Jathanna (DJ), Feroza Sinha (FS), H Satish (HS), JN Prasad (JNP), MB Krishna (MBK), MR Raghavendra (MRR), NR Swamy (NRS), Oscar Ravi Kiran (ORK), S Karthikeyan (SK), U Harish Kumar (UHK).

REGIONAL REFEREES: Andhra Pradesh: A Pittie; Karnataka: JN Prasad; Kerala: PO Nameer; Maharashtra: N Jamdar; Tamil Nadu: V Santharam.



L. Shyamal,  
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Bangalore - 560 054.



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U. Harish Kumar (home tel: 665 5818) J.N. Prasad (home tel: 664 4682)

=====

July 12 (2nd sunday): Birdwatching at Badamanavarthi / valley school -meet us at 8 am near the Silk Research Institute (Valley School cross) bus stop on 17th Km Kanakapura road. Outing will last for about 3 hours.

July 26 (4th sunday): Nature trail at Kalkere State Forest on Bannerghatta road assemble at Koli farm bus stop at 8 am. Outing will last for 3 hours.

=====

Quizzzz:

Answer for June '98 quiz:

The largest venomous snake in the world is King Cobra (for more details read the latest issue of Merlin Quarterly Vol.10 no.2 and the largest non venomous snake is the Reticulated Python of India and Burma. The two venomous lizards of the world are Gila monster and Mexican Beaded Lizard, both occur in Central America. We have no venomous lizards in India. - Quiz master retains the prize as no correct answers received this time.

=====

Quizzzz questions for July '98:

Name the three kinds of Leopards we have in India.

=====

Watch for these trees in bloom in June: Yello Dolly, Potato Tree, Temple tree, Gul Mohur, Copper pod, Pride of India, Purple Bauhinia, Manure tree, Cannon Ball tree, Pink Cassias, Indian Cork Tree and Spectacular Cassia

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BIRDING NOTES Compiled by Aasheesh Pittie - Extracts of birding notes from Karnataka region published in PITTA # 87, July 1998

=====

This column publishes birding notes in brief telegraphic form, from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra & Tamil Nadu on interesting and significant sightings and behaviour like breeding, feeding, migration, nesting, etc. Notes on flowering and fruiting trees and their relationship with birds are also welcome. English names and classification follow, S.D. Ripley "A Synopsis of the Birds of India and Pakistan (1982, 2nd ed.) and scientific nomenclature, T. Inskipp, N. Lindsey & W. Duckworth "An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the Oriental Region (1996). Unless specified, all observations are for 1998. Abbreviations, Contributors, Notes, Regional Referees, etc., are at the end. For selection of breeding criteria-Probable, Possible, Confirmed see Pitta # 82, February 1998, p.4.

KARNATAKA

BANGALORE DISTRICT

Bangalore City

DARTER 20.5: 1 over Ulsoor Tank with cormorants (RA); COUCAL 11.4: PRB, N under const., was destroyed by Bonnet Macaques *Macaca radiata*; SMALL GREEN BARBET 2.5: CB, entering N (in Tulip Tree *Spathodea campanulata*) with food (SK); INDIAN MYNA 22.5: POB, 2 N 1 carrying feather into N & other entering N hole (SK); REDWHISKERED BULBUL 28.5: CB, 1 N with 3 chicks, 4' up in bush (sp. ?) (AP, AmP); WHITE-EYE 17.5: CB, incubating 3 pale blue eggs in N suspended about c.4' up Silver Oak *Grewelia robusta* (PSM).; SPOTTED MUNIA 28.5: PRB, with N-mat., (AP,AmP). Cubbon Park, Bangalore city 24.5 (AP, AmP) SMALL GREEN BARBET CB, N., c., 20' up on underside of branch. Ad., bringing insect (sp. ?) to N; JUNGLE CROW PRB, 1 with N-mat.. Magadi Road (TNAP) BARN OWL 24.11.1997: CB, N in Neem tree *Azadirachta indica* hollow. 4 eggs. 3 fledged during 1st week of Feb 1998. Ad., fed rats (sp. ?) & Grey Musk Shrew *Suncus murinus* to yng; COLLARED SCOPS OWL 12.1997: CB, N with 1 egg; SPOTTED OWLET 12.1997: Ad., carrying food to N.

BIJAPUR DISTRICT (RBN)

Ghataprabha River basin 21.4

LARGE EGRET 2 ad.; POND HERON c. 50 ad.; LITTLE EGRET c. 100+ ad.; WHITE IBIS 3 ad.; SPOTBILL DUCK 2 ad. Mudhol Town BLACK IBIS 7.5: CB, 2 ad., on N atop Mango Mangifera indica; YELLOW-WATTLED LAPWING 30.5: CB, 1 ad., with 1 yng; MOTTLED WOOD OWL 29,30.4: 3 ad., on neem tree; GREY HORNBILL 20.4: 3; BRAHMINY MYNA 30.4: POB, near hollow in tree.

MYSORE DISTRICT

Nagarahole National Park

GREAT BLACK WOODPECKER 5.1998: 1 (PSM).

Talvekere Tank 22.5 (AP, AmP, VB)

GREY PELICAN 7; DARTER 2; GREY HERON 1; PURPLE HERON 1; CATTLE EGRET POB, in br., plm; PAINTED STORK 6; WHITE IBIS 3; BLACK IBIS 13.

SHIMOGA DISTRICT (RBN)

Anandapuram Village, Sagar Taluk 21.5

POND HERON 20; LITTLE EGRET 50+ POB, in br., plm; PURPLE MOORHEN 10.

ABBREVIATIONS: Ab-abundant; ad-adult/s; br-breeding; C-common/ly; CB-confirmed breeding; const-construction/ing; c.-approximately; disp-display/ing; F-female; flt-flight; fly-family; freq-frequent/ly; hrd-heard; id-identify/ied; imm-immature; inc-include/ing; Is-Island; juv-juvenile; LM-local migrant; M-male; mat-material; N-nest/ing/s; POB-possible breeding; PRB-probable breeding; plm-plumage; RF-Reserve Forest; Tlk-Taluk; vil-village; WL-wildlife; yng-young.

CONTRIBUTORS: A Pittie (AP); A Poddar (AmP); B Raha (BR); BV Nitin (BVN); PS Madhusudan (PSM); RB Naik (RBN); R Arvind (RA); S. Karthikeyan (SK); TNA Perumal (TNAP); V Bhagat (VB);

REGIONAL REFEREES: Andhra Pradesh: A Pittie; Karnataka: JN Prasad; Kerala: PO Nameer; Maharashtra: N Jamdar; Tamil Nadu: V Santharam.

Dr. Priyadaishan - 3530069

9PM-6AM

V. Nabokov  
Formic acid

L. Shyamal,  
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800K-POST

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www.aescon.com/rockswave

2285310  
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finger  
rickman.com/finger.html  
darkblueet.scu.edu

in ss - eato @ iart. emethy  
tms@rldet  
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sawash



=====

BIRDWATCHERS' FIELD CLUB OF BANGALORE

13, 2nd 'A' Cross, 7th Main, KSRTC Layout, JP Nagar 2nd Phase, B'lore-78

MERLIN NATURE CLUB

13, 8TH Cross, 30th Main, Sarakki ITI Layout, JP Nagar 1st Phase, B'lore-78

U.Harish Kumar (home tel: 665 5818) J.N.Prasad (home tel: 664 4682)

=====

June 14 (2nd sunday): Birdwatching at Kadugodi Forest Department nursery (opp. to Information Technology park) on White Field road, meet us at 8 am at the nursery entrance near the Kadugodi (ITP) bus stop. Outing will last for 3 hours.

June 28 (4th sunday): Nature trail at Lalbagh, assemble at 7 am at Glass house. Outing will last for 3 hours.

~~~~~

Quizzzz:

Clarification regarding the answer to April '98 quiz wherein, we had asked for: Name any three birds which make their own nest hole in trees - All Barbets and woodpeckers. Many had answered Parakeets and Hoopoe which is not correct as they are secondary hole nesters and their beaks are not designed for excavating holes. Ms Saroj Kiyawat wrote to us, according to Book of Indian birds by Salim Ali, Parakeets often excavate their own holes - yes in a way they do by gnawing or pulling off the fibres but their beaks are not designed to excavate holes like the Barbets or Woodpeckers to chizzle their way through the tree stump.

Answer for May '98 quiz:

- 1) Tickell's flowerpecker is the smallest bird in Bangalore
 - 2) The species of birds which practice brood parasitism that is, they lay eggs in another birds nest - Koel, Plaintive Cuckoo, Indian Cuckoo, Pied Crested Cuckoo, Brainfever bird (most members of the Cuckoo Family except the Malkohas, Sirkeer Cuckoo and Coucals which build their own nest) -
- Prize winner: Ms.Saroj Kiyawat.

Quizzzz questions for June '98:

Which is the largest venomous and non venomous snake in the world? Name the two Venomous lizards in the world.

~~~~~

Operation Magpie Robin:

Great News ! we are very pleased to inform that, out of the 113 nest boxes put up this season, one box put up at Sadashivnagar near Sankey tank has been used by a pair of Magpie Robins, which successfully raised three young ones (reported by Lakshmi Srivatsan/Feroza Sinha). Another box put up at Silverapura is being used by a pair of Grey Tits (reported by Somu Sahi). One more pair of Grey Tits at United Theological College have been showing interest in the nest box put up by us, we hope they may nest there (reported by Devcharan Jathanna).

~~~~~

Watch for these trees in bloom in June: Yello Dolly, Potato Tree, Temple tree, Gul Mohur, Copper pod, Pride of India, Purple Bauhinia, Manure tree, Cannon Ball tree, Pink Cassias and Spectacular Cassia

=====

BIRDING NOTES Compiled by Aasheesh Pittie

This column publishes birding notes in brief telegraphic form, from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra & Tamil Nadu on interesting and significant sightings and behaviour like breeding, feeding, migration, nesting, etc. Notes on flowering and fruiting trees and their relationship with birds are also welcome. English names and classification follow, S.D. Ripley's *A Synopsis of the Birds of India and Pakistan* (1982, 2nd ed.) and scientific nomenclature, T. Inskipp, N. Lindsey & W. Duckworth's *An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the Oriental Region* (1996). Unless specified, all observations are for 1998. Abbreviations, Contributors, Notes, Regional Referees, etc., are at the end.

ANDHRA PRADESH**CHITTOOR DISTRICT****Rishi Valley (SR) 11.3**

LITTLE EGRET POB, 3 in br., plm; COLLARED SCOPS OWL 1; MOTTLED WOOD OWL 1; GREY DRONGO 2; PARADISE FLYCATCHER 1 F; WHITETHROATED GROUND THRUSH 1; LARGE PIED WAGTAIL CB, 2 ad., 2 yng.

HYDERABAD DISTRICT**Banjara Hills**

SPOTTED DOVE 9.5: CB, N with 3 eggs in bougainvillea, 1 laid on consecutive days. 11.5: N destroyed by strong wind. 13.5 PRB, pair const., N in same place (SAT); PLAINTIVE CUCKOO 25.4: 1 F, hepatic phase. Hawking insects like flycatchers, from top of tree (AP); BLACKNAPED BLUE FLYCATCHER 22.4: 1 F hunting inside canopy of fruiting mango tree (AP).

Hyderabad City (HJ)

SHIKRA 2.3: Sunning on ground.; REDHEADED MERLIN 6.5: 1 at Imliban Bus Stand (Central bus stand).

KARNATAKA**BANGALORE DISTRICT****Bangalore City**

BRAHMINY KITE 29.4: 1 imm., N destroyed by heavy rain on 25.4, United Theological College (JNP); SCAVENGER VULTURE 12.2: 2, St. Joseph's College (JNP); SMALL GREEN BARBET 29.4: POB, United Theological College (DJ); INDIAN MYNA 29.4: POB, 1 N (JNP); JUNGLE MYNA 29.4: POB, 4 N (JNP); BLACK HEADED CUCKOO SHRIKE 29.4: United Theological College (JNP); MAGPIE ROBIN 9.5: CB, N in N-box, Sadashivnagar (FS); GREY TIT 21.4: 2 inspecting N-box (JNP).

Kadugodi/Whitefield Area (KVS)

PARIAH KITE 17.4: CB, N with 1 nestling; REDWATTLED LAPWING 14.4: CB, N with 4 eggs, incubating; SPOTTED OWLET 30.4: WHITEBREASTED KINGFISHER 29.4: CB, ad., feeding nestlings; ROLLER 16.4: CB, ad., feeding nestlings; HOOPOE 17.4: CB, ad., feeding 2 yng., outside N; CRIMSONBREASTED BARBET 17.4: CB, incubating; SMALL GREEN BARBET 16.4: CB, ad., feeding nestlings; SINGING BUSH LARK 20.4: CB, N with 4 nestlings fed by ad.; WIRETAILED SWALLOW 26.4: CB, N const.; REDRUMPED SWALLOW 20.4: PRB, N const.; BLACK DRONGO 18.4: CB, incubat-

ing; INDIAN MYNA 18.4: N bldg; JUNGLE MYNA 18.4: N bldg; TREE PIE 17.4: CB, incubating; JUNGLE CROW 26.4: CB, incubating; WHITEBROWED BULBUL 18.4: CB, N with 1 egg & 1 nestling. Ad., feeding yng; INDIAN ROBIN 22.4 CB, N with 1 nestling & 2 eggs, ad., incubating; PADDYFIELD PIPIT 26.4: CB, 1 N with 2 eggs, ad., incubating; LARGE PIED WAGTAIL 26.4: CB, ad., feeding yng; HOUSE SPARROW 15.4: POB, incubating; WHITETHROAT-ED MUNIA 14.4 CB, N with 7 eggs, incubating.

Indiranagar (VK)

HOOPOE 5.4: (becoming very rare in Bangalore) National Institute of Advanced Studies; SMALL GREEN BARBET 16.4: CB, ad., feeding fledgling with Singapore Cherry.

Sadashivnagar (AmP)

NIGHT HERON 1.5: CB, 15 with imm., at heronry nearer Sankey Tank. Many const., N.; PIED CRESTED CUCKOO 1 golf course.

Vasanthnagar (RK, JH, C, JNP)

Maggie Robin 26.4: POB, M Singing & frequently visiting a chimney pipe.

Badamanavarthe State Forest/Valley School 10.5

BLACKHEADED CUCKOO-SHRIKE tail moulting (JNP); BLACK DRONGO PRB, ad., carrying N-mat (MRR); PURPLE SUNBIRD CB, F feeding 2 yng in N in Eresid spiders colony c. 3' from ground (JG)

KOLAR DISTRICT

LESSER PIED KINGFISHER 3.4: 11 on a wire (VK).

MANDYA DISTRICT 29.3 (PCG, DK)**Kokrebellur Bird Sanctuary**

GREY PELICAN 13 orphaned/injured nestlings saved at Kokrebellur pelican pen by volunteers of Hejjarle Balaga (Pelican Conservation Group).

ABBREVIATIONS: Ab-abundant; ad-adult/s; br-breeding; C-common/ly; CB-confirmed breeding; const-construction/ing; c.-approximately; disp-display/ing; F-female; flt-flight; fly-family; freq-frequent/ly; hrd-heard; id-identify/ied; imm-immature; inc-include/ing; Is-Island; juv-juvenile; LM-local migrant; M-male; mat-material; N-nest/ing/s; POB-possible breeding; PRB-probable breeding; plm-plumage; RF-Reserve Forest; Tik-Taluk; vil-village; WL-wildlife; yng-young.

CONTRIBUTORS: A Pittie (AP); Chaitanya (C); D Jathanna (DJ); D Karan (DK); J Griffes (JG); J Hemanth (JH); JN Prasad (JNP); H Jaffer (HJ); KV Srinivas (KVS); MR Raghavendra (MRR); Pelican Conservation Group (PCG); Rajkumar (RK); SA Taher (SAT); S Riyazuddin (SR); Vijay Kiyawat (VK).

REGIONAL REFEREES: Andhra Pradesh: A Pittie; Karnataka: JN Prasad; Kerala: PO Nameer; Maharashtra: N Jamdar; Tamil Nadu: V Santharam.

OBITUARY

Dr. Charles G. Sibley: Born 7 August 1917, Fresno, California, died 12 April 1998, Santa Rosa, California. During his lifetime, Dr. Sibley held many eminent teaching and administrative posts in famous American universities and bird-related organizations. Among these are the Universities of California, Kansas, Yale, Cornell and San Francisco. He was a member of ca. 15 scientific societies, U.S. and foreign; Fellow, Honorary or Corresponding Fellow of Seven; officer or council member of five - 1946-present. He was a Guggenheim Fellow, 1959-60; Treasurer, American Ornithologists' Union (AOU), 1953-62; President, AOU, 1986-88; Secretary-General of the 13th International Ornithological Congress (IOC), 1958-62 and President of the 20th IOC, 1986-1990. Besides this he was on the editorial boards of many technical journals. His publications since 1939 include 132 titles, of which 77 pertain to molecular systematics and evolution. But his most lasting and important contribution to the ornithological world were the three books he co-authored, dealing with the DNA-based classification of birds.

"Phylogeny and Classification of Birds" (with Jon Ahlquist). Yale Univ. Press. 1990.

"Distribution and Taxonomy of Birds of the World" (with Burt Monroe). Yale Univ. Press. 1990.

"A World Checklist of Birds" (with Burt Monroe). Yale Univ. Press. 1993.

For Private Circulation Only

For more information write to: Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh, PO Box 45, Banjara Hills PO, Hyderabad 500034, India.

Errata: The note on BSAP's Anantagiri trip (Pitta # 85, May 1998, p. 1) was written by Hashim Tyabji.

Editors: Aasheesh Pittie & Siraj A Taher. Membership (Rs): Admission=20; Ordinary=100, Student=25 per annum; Life=1,000. E-mail: aasheesh@hd1.vsnl.net.in.

Dec 28 (4th Sunday): In Search of European Bee-eaters beyond Kanakapura environs. Please assemble at 6.30 am at Banashankari Temple on Kanakapura road. Limited seats are available in the Van cost per head Rs 100/-. Full day outing please bring food & water.
~~~~~  
Quiz: The answer to last months quiz is Barheaded Goose which has been recorded flying over the Himalayas around 28,000 feet.

Any guess as to which bird migrates to S.India including Bangalore from Africa just before monsoon. Infact, this bird is often referred to by the locals as the harbinger of the monsoon. Do you recollect having seen it recently? Check your notes!  
~~~~~

Number of participants at Madivala last month - 51
Highlights of the outings: P,W,G,Y Wagtails; Paddyfield Pipit, M.Harrier-3, G.Heron-13, SB duck-9, Shoveller, BW teal, WBK, Dabchick, GH Myna, Coots, Sandpipers-G,W,C; C & WT Swallows.
~~~~~

Some Facts: No.of persons on this mailing list - 144; Amount collected as donation for mailing this circular - Rs 1,640/-.  
Expenses towards postage & xerox - Rs 2,382/- Deficit -Rs 742/-

REQUEST: We have decided to increase the minimum donation to keep you on the mailing list to Rs 25/- per annum. Pls renew your donation towards postage & xerox for 1998. Also pls renew your subscription for 1998 for MERLIN quarterly which happens to be entering the tenth year, by sending Rs 50/-.  
~~~~~

We have launched "Operation Magpie Robin" - to make nest boxes for cavity nesting birds such as the Magpie Robin. Until recently they used to be found in many private compounds but due to rapid growth of the City, it is fast disappearing from Bangalore. Do you know of any place where you have been still seeing this species? Please let us know as soon as possible.
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BIRDWATCHERS' FIELD CLUB OF BANGALORE

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MERLIN NATURE CLUB

13, 8TH Cross, 30th Main, Sarakki ITI Layout, JP Nagar 1st Phase, B'lore-78

U.Harish Kumar (home tel: 665 5818) J.N.Prasad (home tel: 664 4682)

=====

August ²³~~9~~ ^{4th} (2nd sunday): Birdwatching at Lalbagh at 7.30 am Meet us at Lalbagh glass house. Vehicle parking recommended at Double road gate. Outing will last for 3 hours.

August ⁹~~23~~ ^{2nd} (4th sunday): Birdwatching at University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) Hebbal Campus on Bellary (Hyderabad road). Meet us at 8 am near the at the entrance. Outing will last for about 3 hours.

~~~~~

Quizzzz:

Answer for July '98 quiz:

The three Leopards found in India are Clouded Leopard, Snow Leopard and the Leopard. The Prize winner is Mr.M.Naveen.

Quizzzz questions for August '98:

Name the famous Husband and Wife team who fought to save the endangered large cats of Africa. They both were murdered by poachers. The books written by the Wife were made into feature films which was named after one of the cats and it became a box office hit.

~~~~~

Watch for these trees in bloom in June: Yello Dolly, Potato Tree, Temple tree, Copper pod, Pride of India, Purple Bauhinia, Manure tree, Cannon Ball tree, Bottle Brush, Tulip tree, Siam Cassia, Spectacular Cassia, Pink Cassias, Indian Cork Tree and Spectacular Cassia.

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BIRDING NOTES Compiled by Aasheesh Pittie - Due to unavoidable circumstances the extracts of birding notes published in PITTA could not be included this time.

=====

BIRDWATCHERS' FIELD CLUB OF BANGALORE

13, II A CROSS, 7TH MAIN, KSTRC LAYOUT, JP NAGAR II PHASE, BANGALORE-78
email:avian@giabga.vsnl.net.in

MERLIN NATURE CLUB

13, 8TH CROSS, 30TH MAIN, JP NAGAR I PHASE, B'LORE-78 (TEL:6644682)

April 12th sunday: Birdwatching at Lalbagh, assemble at 7.00 am near Glass House. Contact Mr.U.Harish Kumar Tel : 665 5818 (7-9.30 pm)

April 26th Sunday: Slide illustrated talk on Wildlife of Karnataka by Mr.S.G.Neginhal, IFS (retd) at 6 pm venue: 143, II floor, Kamala Mansion, Opp. The Hindu, Infantry road, Bangalore - 560 001. This program is jointly organised with WWF-India.

QUIZ :Answer to March '98 The shrike which winters in Bangalore is Brown Shrike Prize Winner: T.N.Ramamani

Quizzzzzz for April '98: Name any three birds which make their own nest hole in trees.

Operation Magpie Robin: As a part of the project to put up nest boxes for Magpie Robin, after a survey of the locations in Bangalore, we have come across the species in Lalbagh, Cubbon Park (rare), Sadashivnagar, I.I.Sc campus, Vasanthnagar, Palace orchards, Raman Research Institute, Kalkere arboretum, Malleshwaran and Bannerghatta. If you have come across this species in other areas of Bangalore, please let us know as we are loosing this bird even in many of the above areas.

Watch for these trees in bloom in March/April: Mango, Jacaranda, Yellow Tabebuia, Yello Dolly, Rain tree, ChampaK, Potato Tree, Temple tree, Rose Tabebuia, Gul Mohur, Copper pod, Pride of India, Purple Bauhinia, Manure tree, Noble Amherstia (Lalbagh, Sadashivnagar), Cannon Ball tree and Flame of the Forest.

Following is the extracts of Bird notes for Karnataka from PITTA # 84, April 1998 Bulletin of the Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh

BIRDING NOTES Compiled by Aasheesh Pittie

This column publishes birding notes in brief telegraphic form, from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra & Tamil Nadu on interesting and significant sightings and behaviour like breeding, feeding, migration, nesting, etc. Notes on flowering and fruiting trees and their relationship with birds are also welcome. English names and classification follow, S.D. Ripley's A Synopsis of the Birds of India and Pakistan (1982, 2nd ed.) and scientific nomenclature, T. Inskipp, N. Lindsey & W. Duckworth: An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the Oriental Region (1996). Unless specified, all observations are for 1998. Notes, Abbreviations and Contributors are at the end. Please send in your contributions to J.N.Prasad
KARNATAKA

BANGALORE DISTRICT

Bangalore City

PARIAH KITE 16.03: CB incubating? (SK); SMALL GREEN BARBET 16.03: POB suspected N (SK); REDWHISKERED BULBUL 15.03: (PAU).

Ramamurthynagar

HOUSE SPARROW 16.03: PRB building N (BP).

Silvepura

SMALL GREEN BARBET 25.02: CB (PSJ); MAGPIE ROBIN 23.02: CB, N with 3 eggs (CEJL).

Yelahanka 13.03 (BSP)

LARGE PIED WAGTAIL CB (probably Incubating).

BIJAPUR DISTRICT

? 04.01 (CTH) COMMON BUSTARD-QUAIL.

MANDYA DISTRICT

Shettihalli Heronry 08.03 (JNP, AmP)

Heronry on a few Fig trees on the busy Bangalore-Mysore highway. LITTLE CORMORANT CB, N; GREY HERON CB, 7 N (3 Nest building / reinforcing ?; 3 N with yng); NIGHT HERON CB, 4 N (2 imm).

Thailur tank 08.03

GREY PELICAN 17 fishing (JNP); PAINTED STORK 8 (JNP, AmP); BLACK IBIS 19 (JNP); BLACKTAILED GODWIT 43 (JNP, AmP); GREENSHANK 20+ (JNP); WHISKERED TERN 2 (UHK); BLACKBELLIED TERN 1 (UHK); BLUETAILED BEE-EATER 4 hawking dragonflies (JNP, AmP).

MYSORE DISTRICT

Ranganathitto Bird Sanctuary 14.03 (EHR)

SPOONBILL CB, 1N with 3 yng.

SHIMOGA DISTRICT

Bhadra River Project (SK)

ASHY CROWNED FINCH LARK 10.02: PRB courting pair.; TICKELL'S FLOWERPECKER PRB N building 11.02; YELLOW THROATED SPARROW 10.02.

TUMKUR DISTRICT

Devarayanadurga State Forest 01.03 (SK/JNP)

YELLOWTHROATED BULBUL PRB a pair peeling pieces/fibres off dry lantana bush and carrying them in their bill to a dense un-id., bush; BLUE ROCK THRUSH 1 M.

ABBREVIATIONS: Ab-abundant; ad-adult/s; br-breeding; C-common/ly; CB-confirmed breeding; const-construction/ing; c.-approximately; disp-display/ing; F-female; flt-flight; fly-family; freq-frequent/ly; hrd-heard; id-identify/ied; imm-immature; inc-include/ing; Is-Island; juv-juvenile; LM-local migrant; M-male; mat-material; N-nest/ing/s; POB-possible breeding; PRB-probable breeding; plm-plumage; RE-Reserve Forest; Tlk-Taluk; vil-village; WL-wildlife; yng-young.

CONTRIBUTORS: A. Relton (AR), Aasheesh Pittie (AP), Amitabh Poddar (AmP), Ashish Kothari (AK), BS Prabhakar (BSP), Bineesha P (BP), CT Hash (CTH), Chris & Eric J. Lott (CEJL), CV Aneesh (CVA), E Hanumantha Rao (EHR), JN Prasad (JNP), K Kumar (KK), PA Ullas (PAU), PS Javgal (PSJ), S Ashok Kumar (SAK), S Karthikeyan (SK), Sudhakar Kurhade (SuK), U Harish Kumar (UHK), V Santharam (VS).

NOTES:

1. "The song may be heard sporadically all through the winter." [Handbook]
- 2 In Pitta # 83 p. 4, Haironstedt Deongo at Bannerghatta N.P. (Bangalore Dist., Karnataka) was seen on flowering Eucalyptus sp., and Spathodea campanulata trees
- 3 earlier Cochin.
- 4 earlier Trivandrum.
- 5 earlier Trichur.
- 6 Not a common bird in Madras. at times confused with Bluethroated Flycatcher, when tail pattern is clinching evidence. (VS)

REGIONAL REFEREES: Andhra Pradesh: A Pittie; Karnataka: JN Prasad; Kerala: PO Nameer; Maharashtra: N Jamdar; Tamil Nadu: V Santharam.

BOOK-POST
To

L. Shyamal,
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Newsletter for Birdwatchers

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Publisher : S. Sridhar

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Seshadripuram,
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REF. :

Date : 02.02.98

DATE :

Mr.L. Shyamal,
No.1. 12 B Main Road,
Muthyalnagar,
BANGALORE - 560 054.

Dear Mr.L. Shyamal.

We would be very happy if you agree to participate in a birdwatching outing cum Lunch at DODDA-GUBBI on Sunday, the 1st March 1998.

We will meet at the old Futehally residence and then settle down next door at Major APPACHU's estate. We will expect you at 9 a.m. or earlier if you wish.

We are also pleased to inform you that further to our announcement in the Newsletter (Vol.37, Issue No.5), the draw to select the winner for a free holiday for three days at any of the Sterling Holiday Resorts in India, will be held at 12.00 noon. The draw will be followed by lunch.

Your confirmation (names of visitors) must reach Mrs. C. Vimala (Navbharath Enterprises, No.10, Sirur Park 'B' Street, Seshadripuram, BANGALORE - 560 020, Tel. : 3364142/3364682) before 20th February 1998.


ZAFAR FUTEHALLY


S. SRIDHAR

Most of you will remember the location. From Lingarajpuram level crossing, proceed towards Bagalur on the Hennur - Bagalur Road. At the 9th km. you will come to KOTHANUR. One km further, you will see the Southern Asia Bible College on the left. Half a km further on is BYRATI BANDE, and here you turn right. Pass a quarry & you reach the house.

Birdwatchers' Field Club of Bangalore
No.13, 2A cross, 7th Main KSRTC Layout, JP Nagar 2nd phase, Bangalore 560078.

Merlin Nature Club
No.13, 8th cross, 30th main JP Nagar 1st phase, Bangalore 560078.

U. Harish Kumar (Phone 6655818)

J. N. Prasad (Phone 6644682)

Please get your cap, drinking water, note pad, pen and a pair of binoculars (if possible).

Nov 5 (1st wednesday): Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIAP) have organised a slide illustrated talk on birds by Mr.S. Kartikeyan, Education officer, WWF-India at 4 pm in IIAP auditorium in Koramangala.

Nov 9 (2nd sunday): Birdwatching in search of the migrants at Madivala tank. Assemble at the Forest dept. nursery (boat house) on west bank of Madivala tank at 7.30 am. Nearest bus stop is BTM layout on the ring road between Hosur road and Bannerghatta road.

Nov 22 (4th saturday): Talk on Bangalore - then and now by Mr. T.N.A.Perumal, famous wildlife photographer at WWF - India, 143, Kamala Mansion, Infantry road, (opp to the Hindhu office), Bangalore-1 at 3.45 pm.

~~~~~  
Quiz: Thanks for the overwhelming response for the quiz. Answer to the last months quiz is Yellow throated Sparrow; Any guess which bird holds the record for flying highest during migration. Infact this bird occassionally comes even to Bangalore. Lets hope to see it this winter.

~~~~~  
No. of participants last month: Lalbagh-25; Badamanavarthe-29

Highlights of last month outings: Lalbagh 12.10.1997 - Birds nesting - Dabchicks - 2 nest; Pariah Kite and Spotted dove nestbuilding. Winter visitors - Marsh Harrier, Grey Drongo, Greenish Leaf Warbler, Grey Wagtail.

Badamanavarthe (Valley School) outing: 26.10.1997 - Noted Migrants are Greenish Leaf Warbler, Brown Shrike, Common Swallow, Indian Tree pipits and Pied crested Cuckoo.

Interesting sightings were the Rufous backed & Baybacked Shrikes, Iora, Little brown Dove & Hoopoe - all these species are being driven out of B'lore due to changing of the habitats

~~~~~  
Have you seen a Hoopoe recently in Bangalore - was a question asked by Dr. Joseph George during a recent meeting. Lack of suitable nesting sites and habitat are forcing many species out of Bangalore & we strongly feel you would realise this if you start comparing your bird notes. Keep a watch on the birds around you and think and do what you can for saving them.

-----

**Institute for Natural Resources Conservation,  
Education, Research & Training (INCERT)**

No. 10, Sirur Park, 'B' Street, Seshadripuram, Bangalore - 560 020

*Date : 18th September 1998*

To,

Mr. Shyamal L  
No.1, 12 B Main, Road,  
Muthyalanagar  
BANGALORE - 560 054.

Dear Friend,

**Sub : Prevention of Ritual Hunting of Wild Animals & Birds.**

Further to the Workshop on prevention of ritual sacrifice of animals, held on 29-30 August 1998, at Mysore, CUPA has organised a meeting on Saturday the 26th September 1998 at 4.30 P.M. at the Office of Director General of Fire Force and Home Guards, No. 1, Annaswamy Mudaliar Road, Bangalore - 560 042. (West Bank of Ulsoor Lake), to discuss and formulate an action plan for prevention of ritual hunting of wild animals and birds, which is taking place annually during December-January in four pre-designated spots around Bangalore. Nearly 500 wild animals including jackals, blacknaped hares, mongooses, fruit bats and porcupines, and birds such as blackwinged kites, marsh harriers, egrets and coucals were hunted down last year during December-January 97-98. (See enclosed report dated *23rd August 1998 - Prajavani*).

Since the next ritual hunting season is due to begin in about two months time, there is an urgent and imperative need to arrive at a planned strategy to prevent this evil practice, which is taking place in contravention of the Wildlife Act of 1972.

Therefore, I request you to kindly attend this meeting and offer your valuable suggestions.

*Please ring up any one of the following persons to confirm your participation :*

Mr. S. Sridhar : 3364142

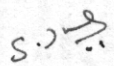
Mr. Paresh Karmarkar : 3489525

Ms. Aarathi Devaraj : 2221638

Thanking you and looking forward to your participation.

Yours faithfully,

for INCERT

  
(S. Sridhar)

Encl : Copy of the Newspaper report.

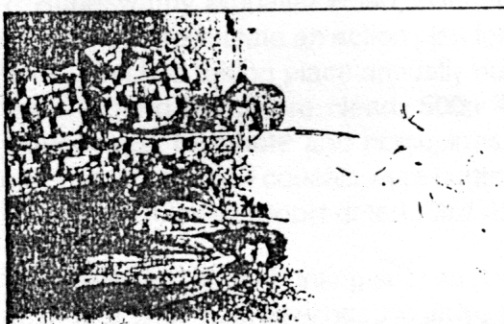


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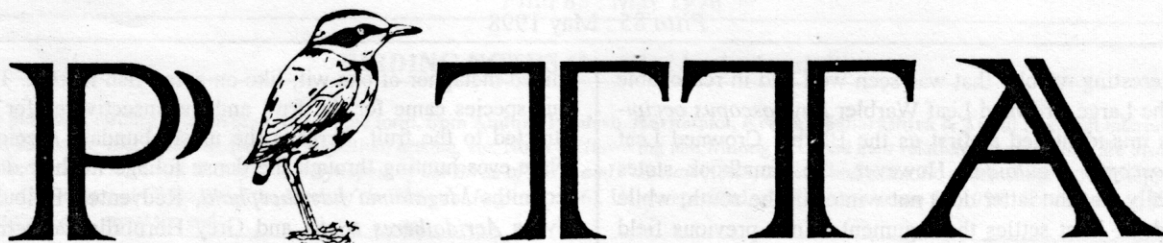
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అందుకు ప్రతిఘటించి భారత ప్రభుత్వం ద్వారా అనేక చర్యలు తీసుకోబడ్డాయి. ఇందులో భాగంగా భారత ప్రభుత్వం భారతీయ రైతులకు అనుకూలంగా ఉండే విధంగా చర్యలు తీసుకుంటుంది. భారత ప్రభుత్వం భారతీయ రైతులకు అనుకూలంగా ఉండే విధంగా చర్యలు తీసుకుంటుంది.

[illegible][illegible]



PROGRAMME

**FIELD OUTING: 10-05-1998, 7.30 am: Nehru Zoological Park, Hyderabad :** We request members with personal transport, willing to accommodate people, to volunteer to the Hon. Secretary and make the trip a success. We meet in front of ticket counter.

**INDOOR MEETING: 18-05-1998, 6 pm: Exhibition of Wildlife Paintings by Sachin Jaltare & Shrikant Wamanrao Kolhe & Talk on 'Falcons and Falconry' by Hyder Jaffer:** Vidyaranya High School, Opp., Secretariat, Saifabad, Hyderabad 500004.

NOTES & NEWS

FIELD TRIP TO ANANTGIRI: 19 APRIL 1998

The field trip almost did not happen for some of us who were traveling in Aasheesh Pittie's car. A couple of unscheduled stops caused by dirt in the fuel line followed by an abortive attempt at engaging the services of a roadside mechanic did not augur well for the trip. Fortunately the mechanic belonged to that rare breed of humanity that not only understand their limitations but are also content to operate within them. He stoutly resisted all blandishments on the grounds that his line was tractors and not dainty city run-arounds. Considering that his primary technical appliance appeared to be a large hammer of indeterminate vintage, I was in whole-hearted agreement with this assessment. Happily, Aasheesh's car, seemingly invigorated by this passage of arms, resumed its normal running and no further mechanical glitches were experienced for the rest of the trip.

The Anantgiri forest is spread across low, dry hills. The vegetation is dry deciduous on the exposed hill slopes, merging to moist mixed in the valley, with (introduced) elements of evergreen in the form of mango trees. The soil appears to be lateritic on the slopes and sandy in the valleys. The dry vegetation is characterised by trees like *Chloroxylon swietania*, *Lannea grandis*, and other unidentified species, generally leafless at this time of year. The moist mixed vegetation consisted of *Albizia lebbek*, *Albizia procera* (few), *Cassia fistula* (*amaltas* or Indian laburnum), tamarind or *imli*, *Ficus bengalensis* (banyan), *Tectona grandis* (teak - seemingly planted), *Erythrina* sp. (coral tree) with only a few flowers, a number of *Samanea saman* (the rain tree, which is introduced), *Pongamia pinnata* (*karanj*, also certainly planted), some *Azadirachta indica* (neem) and a species of large tree in a motley livery of young flush and bare patches identified by a local as USKAMAN, supporting much bird activity. *Madhuca indica* (mahua) is also well represented and at this time of year many sport the coppery hue of new foliage. The most striking feature of the vegetation on this trip was the spectacle of the extravagantly flowering *Bauhinia vahlii* vine, luxuriantly draped across huge sections of the canopy absolutely alive with birds, particularly sunbirds (*Nectarinia* sp.). The shrubbery was almost entirely composed of leafless *Lantana camara* and *Zizyphus* sp. There was also a stand of young eucalyptus. Some other trees remained unidentified.

The general state of the forest is highly degraded with considerable pressure being exerted by fuel wood collectors and cattle, the bane of the Indian jungle. In spite of this the forest supports a reasonable diversity of bird species. Human manipulation of the habitat is significant in the form of introduced tree species, which often enhance the habitat in favour of some species of birds. Whether this manipulation has acted against other species is not known since we

do not have records from the past with which to make a comparative analysis.

As we began our descent into the valley from the temple, attention was attracted to a large tree across from us, which was buzzing with birds. One warbler immediately attracted attention. Foraging busily through the fresh green of the new flush it looked larger than a leaf warbler *Phylloscopus* sp., with a heavier bill and, at first glance gave the impression of an *Acrocephalus* sp., warbler. However, careful inspection revealed greenish colour and an indistinct wing bar. The supercilium was long, pale and very distinct, stretching almost to the nape. Colour of bill was fleshy pink. It is difficult to distinguish the Largebilled leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus magnirostris* from the Greenish Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus trochiloides* in the field. Colouring and markings are similar. Distinguishing features are the relative sizes of the birds. The Handbook records this as the largest of our leaf warblers. Its winter habitat is shola and evergreen forest. However, these particular birds were possibly passage migrants. They were certainly favouring trees with dense foliage.





Another interesting warbler that was seen well and in reasonable numbers was the Large Crowned Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus occipitalis*. This was mis-identified at first as the Blyth's Crowned Leaf Warbler *Phylloscopus reguloides*. However, the Handbook states quite categorically that the latter does not winter in the south, while *P. occipitalis* does. That settles the argument. Since previous field trips to Anantgiri have not recorded this species, it is possible that these birds were passage migrants en route to their breeding grounds in the Himalayas.

Apart from these warblers, this tree locally called 'Uskaman (?)' hosted a large party of Oriental White-eyes *Zosterops palpebrosus*, Purplerumped Sunbirds *Nectarinia zeylonica* and Redvented Bulbuls *Pycnonotus cafer*.

Hyder and Hatim first spotted the Paradise Flycatcher *Terpsiphone paradisi*. These turned out to be fairly common but are always good to see. One adult male in all its glory made a brief but stately appearance to the delight of Madhukar Reddy's son and nephew. It is an excellent bird for the initiation of novice birders. The White-browed Fantail Flycatchers *Rhipidura aureola* were first seen in a tamarind near the top of the steps along with a trio of Small Minivets *Pericroctus cinnamomeus*. However, as we descended into the valley it was the southern race of the White-throated Fantail Flycatcher *R.a. albogularis*, hunting low with their wider fantails, which were commoner. At one place 3 birds performed their mesmeric aerial ballet watched in fascinated delight at close quarters by us. On the whole we saw more White-throated Fantail Flycatchers than White-browed. The fact that most of our birdwatching was done in the valley perhaps explains this. It is interesting to compare the different hunting techniques of these two fantails and relate these to their morphology and preferred habitats. Of the 4 species of flycatchers seen, the Tickell's Blue Flycatcher *Cyornis tickelliae* was the commonest.

Humayun spotted a single Red Spurfowl *Galloperdix spadicea* moving up a burnt slope. It would be interesting to see how spurfowl have fared in this degraded habitat.

Hyder also discovered the nest of a Crested Hawk-Eagle *Spi-zaetus cirrhatus* 30 feet above the ground, in a eucalyptus tree. At first the bird left the nest and perched about 150 yards away. Once it had satisfied itself that our intentions were peaceful it returned and it was obvious that it was incubating eggs.

In all habitats there are certain species of plants that act as 'Force Multipliers'. These are species whose presence dramatically boosts the carrying capacity of that habitat in terms both of diversity of species and absolute numbers. The two large banyan trees at the bottom of the valley, in full and abundant fruit, graphically illustrated this observation. They were full of birds and sounded, in the

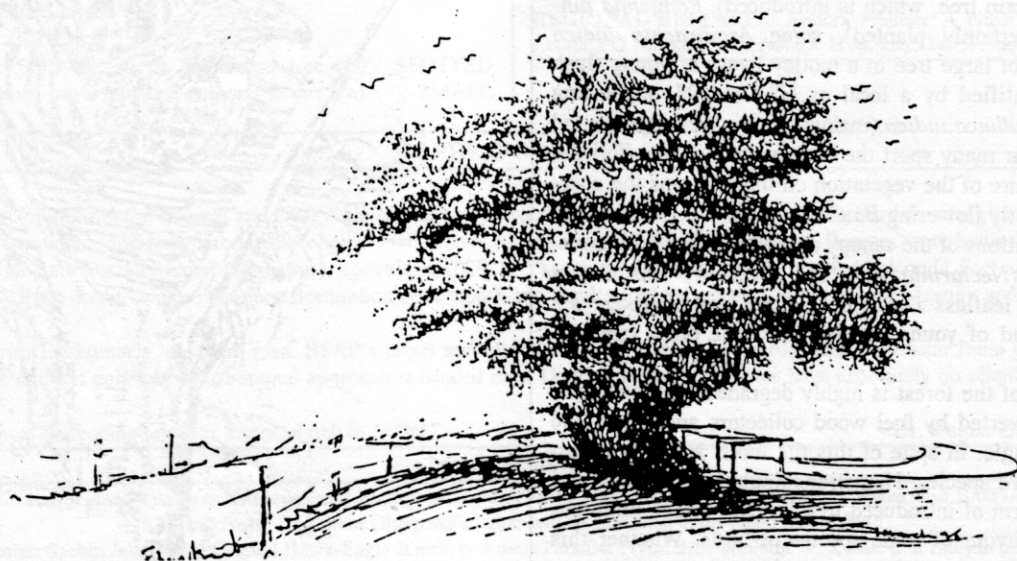
mixed metaphor of one wit, like an avian fish market. The frugivorous species came for the fruit and the insectivores for the insects attracted to the fruit. Perhaps the most abundant species were the White-eyes hunting through the dense foliage in their dozens. Coppersmiths *Megalaima haemacephala*, Redvented Bulbul, Common Mynas *Acridotheres tristis* and Grey Hornbills *Ocyrceros birostris* were all present. A trio of Lesser Goldenbacked Woodpeckers *Dinopium benghalense* were there and a few Yellow-eyed Babbblers *Chrysomma sinense* looking exotic amongst the bright green of the new leaves. The activity of the foragers and the frugivores flushed out many insects, creating a niche that was happily exploited by a busy foursome of Tickell's Blue Flycatchers and a young Paradise flycatcher male that had not yet achieved the milky hues of maturity.

A Jungle Nightjar *Caprimulgus indicus* was also heard calling quite close by and was spotted crouched on an almost horizontal branch of a small tree. As soon as we spotted it, the bird wriggled further into the crook of the branch but since we did not approach, it remained in good view. Another nightjar further up the hill answered its call.

Interestingly we saw no bee-eaters (Meropidae) despite the fact that one of the large rain trees was densely festooned with beehives. On the other hand we did see a termite mound that had been thoroughly demolished and a Sloth Bear *Melursus ursinus* could well have been responsible. Considering that its Latin name means 'honey bear' it would have an ample supply of honey! Unfortunately we forgot to enquire whether any bears were still reported from this forest.

The icing on the cake for some of us were a noisy pair of White-browed Bulbuls *Pycnonotus luteolus* in a mango tree and an Orange-headed Ground Thrush *Zoothera citrina cyanotus* (white-throated race), first spotted by Aasheesh, amongst the leaf litter. All in all this was a hot but productive trip with a total of 51 species seen and two young birdwatchers initiated.

Memberships which expired on 31-3-1998 should be renewed at the rates given below. The status of your membership is indicated on the address label of your envelope. An early renewal will help the Society. Membership in Rs: Life 1,000; Ordinary 100 p.a.; Student 25 p.a.; Corporate 2,000 (20 years); Foreign US \$ 15 p.a.; Student membership up to 10<sup>th</sup> class. Payment should favour "Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh" and should be sent to the address at the end of this Bulletin.





**BIRDING NOTES** *Compiled by Aasheesh Pittie*

This column publishes birding notes in brief telegraphic form, from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra & Tamil Nadu on interesting and significant sightings and behaviour like breeding, feeding, migration, nesting, etc. Notes on flowering and fruiting trees and their relationship with birds are also welcome. English names and classification follow, S.D. Ripley's *A Synopsis of the Birds of India and Pakistan* (1982, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) and scientific nomenclature, T. Inskipp, N. Lindsey & W. Duckworth's *An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the Oriental Region* (1996). Unless specified, all observations are for 1998. Abbreviations, Contributors, Notes, Regional References, etc., are at the end.

**ANDHRA PRADESH**

**CHITTOOR DISTRICT (VS)**

**Rishi Valley**

TAWNY EAGLE 4-6.2: 1 in flt; SPOTTED DOVE 4-6.2: POB, courting; HOOPOE 4-6.2: POB, hrd calls. 9-12.3: CB, 1 yng with ad.; HAIRCRESTED DRONGO 4-6.2: fairly C.; BLACK-HEADED CUCKOO-SHRIKE 9-12.3; LARGE PIED WAGTAIL 9-12.3 CB, 2 yng with ad.; LOTEN'S SUNBIRD 9-12.3: POB singing; PURPLE SUNBIRD 9-12.3: POB singing; SPOTTED MUNIA 4-6.2: CB, ad., with yng; WHITERUMPED MUNIA 4-6.2: CB, 2 juv., with ad.

**Rishi Valley, Outskirts of 16.2**

ASHYCROWNED FINCHLARK PRB, N nearing completion; LARGE GREY BABBLER hrd.

**Ghattu Village 6.2**

GREY HERON CB, 8 N on *Ficus* sp. tree.

**Baiji Cheruvu 6.2**

NIGHT HERON CB, several juv., & old N on *Acacia* sp. trees.

**Pedda Tippa Samudram 6.2**

WHITENECKED STORK 1; BARHEADED GOOSE 3.

**Ranga Samudram 6.2**

BLACK IBIS 2; PINTAIL 1691; COOT c. 1000.

**HYDERABAD DISTRICT**

**Kasu Brahmananda Reddy National Park (MS, SAT)**

GREY PARTRIDGE 4-11.4: CB, 3 imm.

**Osmania Hospital, Hyderabad City 14.4 (MS, SAT)**

ROSY PASTOR several.

**MAHBUBNAGAR DISTRICT 4.3 (HJ)**

**Mahbubnagar Town (near)**

WHITE-EYED BUZZARD CB, a pair N.

**NELLORE DISTRICT (VS)**

**Chennuru Tank 11.2**

REDCRESTED POCHARD 285; COMMON POCHARD 110; TUFTED DUCK 480.

**Gudur Tank 11.2**

COMMON POCHARD 2410.

**Kesavaram Tank 11.2**

OPENBILL STORK 164 resting on trees in tank; WHITENECKED STORK 5.

**Nelapattu Pelicanry 1.3**

GREY PELICAN CB, 200+ N with 2-3 yng each.; SHAG CB, good numbers with yng LITTLE CORMORANT CB, good numbers with yng; NIGHT HERON 100+, CB, several juv.; OPENBILL STORK 600+, CB, several juv; BLACKHEADED IBIS 150+, CB, juv.; COOT CB, 2-3 juv.

**Pennaki Tank 11.2**

PINTAIL 1000; REDCRESTED POCHARD 25; COMMON POCHARD 1100; COLLARED SAND MARTIN 100+ in flt.

**Ragi Cheruvu 11.2**

REDCRESTED POCHARD 6; COOT CB, 7-8 ad., with 3-4 yng.

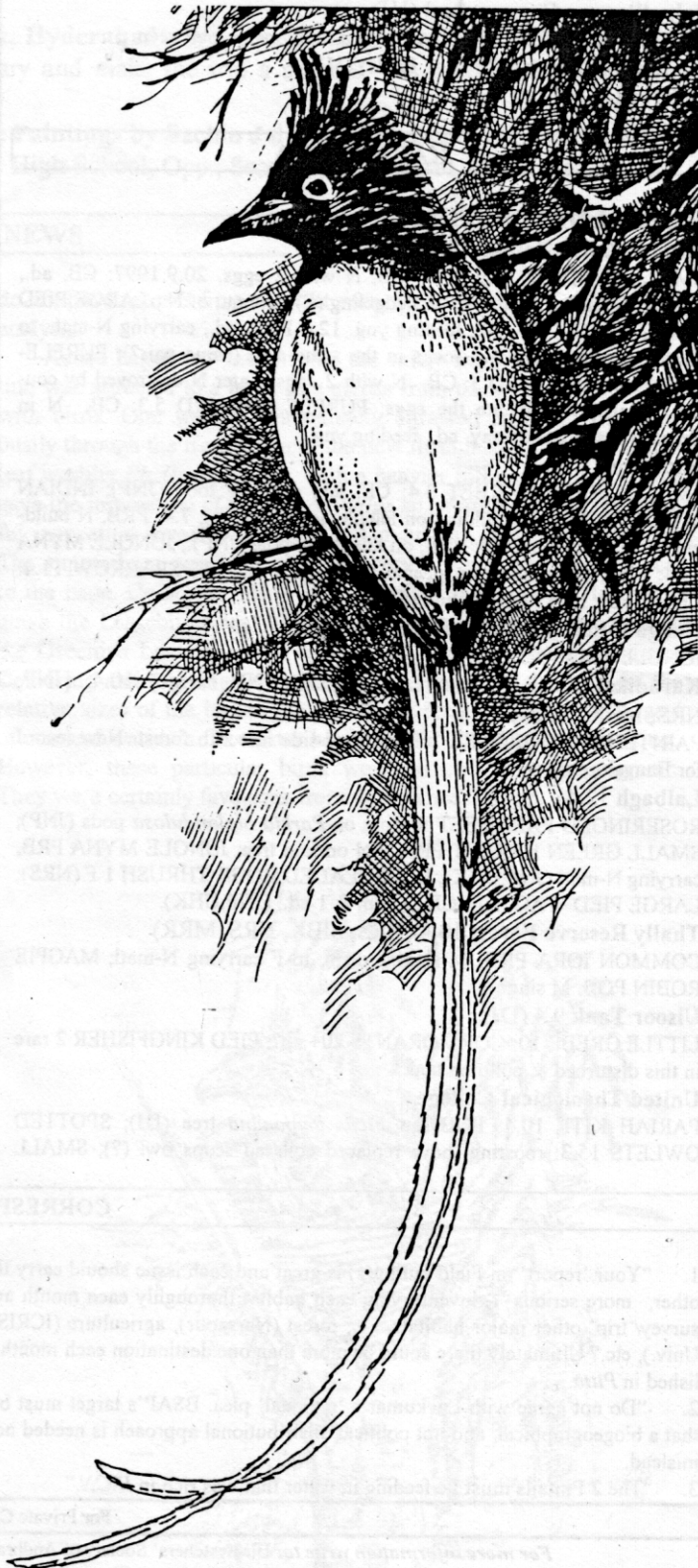
**Tada 28.2**

SHAG CB, juv., on N tree; LITTLE CORMORANT CB, juv., on N tree; GREY HERON CB, juv., on N tree.

**Vedurupattu**

PAINTED STORK 11.2: CB, c. 200 incubating & with yng. N on vil., trees. 28.2: CB, 150+ yng hrd/seen at most N.; SHORT-TOED EAGLE 11.2: 1; WHISKERED TERN 11.2: 1490 in flt. Going to roost? COMMON MOORHEN 11.2: CB, ad., with 2 yng; COOT 11.2: CB, 2 ad with 7 yng; LITTLE RINGED PLOVER 11.2: CB, 1 yng following ad., on dry river

bed; ASHYCROWNED FINCH-LARK 11 & 28.2: POB, disp.; SMALL SKYLARK POB, song/disp.; WHITETHROATED MUNIA 28.2: 2 entering N, late evening - roost?



## RANGAREDDI DISTRICT

Anantgiri, Vikarabad Mandal 19.4 (AP)

RED SPURFOWL 1; CRESTED HAWK-EAGLE CB, 1 N, 30' up eucalyptus tree, ad., incubating; YELLOWLEGGED GREEN PIGEON 1; JUNGLE NIGHTJAR 2; MAHRATTA WOODPECKER 1; BLACK-BACKED WOODPECKER; BAYBACKED SHRIKE 1; WHITEBELLED DRONGO; IORA POB; M in br., plm; WHITEBROWED BULBUL; RUFOUSBELLED BABBLER C; LARGE-BILLED LEAF WARBLER few; LARGE CROWNED LEAF WARBLER few; MAGPIE ROBIN POB, M in song; WHITE-THROATED GROUND THRUSH POB, in song; YELLOWTHROATED SPARROW.

Jalpalli, near Gaganpahad (HJ)

REDHEADED MERLIN 21.3 CB, N on toddy palm, pair seen.

Kondapur (beyond Jubilee Hills) (HJ)

KESTREL 8.3: 1 F.

## KARNATAKA

### BANGALORE DISTRICT

Bannerghatta National Park (HS)

SMALL MINIVET 12.9.1997: CB, N with 2 eggs. 20.9.1997: CB, ad., feeding 2 chicks; 26.9.1997: 2 fledgeling (F) flew out of N.; LARGE PIED WAGTAIL 27.3 CB, ad., feeding yng. 12.4 PRB, ad., carrying N-mat., to another site between two rocks in the same area (same pair?); PURPLE-RUMPED SUNBIRD 5.3: CB, N with 2 eggs. Later N destroyed by coucal, which probably ate the eggs; PURPLE SUNBIRD 5.3: CB, N in *Eresid* sp. spider's colony, ad., feeding yng.

Bangalore City

SMALL GREEN BARBET 3.4: CB, ad., carrying food (JNP); INDIAN MYNA 1.4: PRB, N building on telephone pole (JNP). 7.4: PRB, N building on electric pole. 15.4: PRB, on telephone pole (JNP); JUNGLE MYNA 15.4: PRB, N building on peepal tree (JNP); HOUSE SPARROW 11.4: CB, N (FS). 13.4 PRB, mating (SK).

Kaggalipura: Ramaiah Farm 12.4 (JNP)

JUNGLE CROW CB, N.

Karadikal State Forest (Bannerghatta NP range) 10.4: (JNP, NRS, MBK, MRR)

PAINTED SANDGROUSE 1 F, on road-side in scrub forest. New record for Bangalore.

Lalbagh 12.4

ROSERINGED PARAKEET feeding on *Parkia biglandulosa* pods (JNP); SMALL GREEN BARBET PRB, 2 N on rain tree; JUNGLE MYNA PRB, carrying N-mat (JNP, UHK); BLUEHEADED ROCK THRUSH 1 F (NRS); LARGE PIED WAGTAIL CB, 2 imm & 1 ad., (JNP, UHK).

Thally Reserve Forest 10.4 (NRS, MBK, NRS, MRR)

COMMON IORA PRB, M singing/disp., to F carrying N-mat; MAGPIE ROBIN POB, M singing.

Ulsoor Tank 9.4 (DJ)

LITTLE GREBE 10; CORMORANTS 20+ sp?; PIED KINGFISHER 2 rare in this disturbed & polluted tank.

United Theological College

PARIAH KITE 10.4: POB, on *Ficus benjamina* tree (DJ); SPOTTED OWLETS 15.3: roosting, have replaced collared scops owl (?); SMALL

GREEN BARBET 19.4: CB, N on gulmohur tree, ad., carrying food (DJ); INDIAN MYNA possible nesting; JUNGLE MYNA CB, 2 N. Ad., carrying food (DJ, JNP); MAGPIE ROBIN 12.4: PRB, F carrying N-mat, M singing (ORK);

Yedamadu village 27.3-3.4 (HS)

MAGPIE ROBIN CB, N 10' up a papaya tree in chikkoo orchard with 2 yng & 2 unhatched eggs. 2 yng fledged out successfully.

## TAMIL NADU

### CHENNAI DISTRICT (VS)

Adyar Estuary & Theosophical Society 1.2

EASTERN GOLDEN PLOVER 500; BLACKWINGED STILT 2480; TEREK SANDPIPER 1; LARGE EGRET 16; SMALL GREEN BITTERN 1; GARGANEY 132.

Guindy National Park

PAINTED STORK 8.3: CB, 1 N on net of aviary in Children's Park.; REDWINGED CRESTED CUCKOO 8.2: 1; COPPERSMITH 8.3: CB, carrying *Ficus* sp. fruit to N hole; TREE PIE 8.3: PRB, N under const.; BLUETHROATED FLYCATCHER 8.2: 1-2 hrd; PARADISE FLYCATCHER 8.2: 1 M; MAGPIE-ROBIN 8.2: POB, in song; FOREST WAGTAIL 8.2: 2-3; LOTEN'S SUNBIRD 8.3: POB, in song/disp.

Santhome, Chennai

COMMON SWALLOW 5.3: several seen flying northward in mid March. Very few to none by end March. PURPLERUMPED SUNBIRD 5.3: CB, yng being fed by ad.; HOUSE SPARROW 24.2: CB, ad., feeding yng at N.

### DHARMAPURI DISTRICT 10.4 (NRS, JNP, MBK, MRR)

Thally Tank

DABCHICK POB, in br., plm; POND HERON & CATTLE EGRET POB, in br., plm; LESSER WHISTLING TEAL; INDIAN MOORHEN 10; COOT 296 CB, several imm; PHEASANT-TAILED JACANA 5; COMMON SANDPIPER 1; COPPERSMITH CB, ad., carrying food.

Dharmapuri District: enroute to Thally Village

PARIAH KITE CB, N; BROWN SHRIKE; MAGPIE ROBIN POB, M singing.

ABBREVIATIONS: Ab-abundant; ad-adult/s; br-breeding; C-common/ly; CB-confirmed breeding; const-construction/ing; c.-approximately; disp-display/ing; F-female; flt-flight; fly-family; freq-frequent/ly; hrd-heard; id-identify/ied; imm-immature; inc-include/ing; Is-Island; juv-juvenile; LM-local migrant; M-male; mat-material; N-nest/ing/s; POB-possible breeding; PRB-probable breeding; plm-plumage; RF-Reserve Forest; Tlk-Taluk; vil-village; WL-wildlife; yng-young.

CONTRIBUTORS: Aasheesh Pittie (AP), Devcharan Jathanna (DJ), Feroza Sinha (FS), Hyder Jaffer (HJ), H Satish (HS), JN Prasad (JNP), MB Krishna (MBK), MR Raghavendra (MRR), M Shafaatulla (MS), NR Swamy (NRS), Oscar Ravi Kiran (ORK), SA Taher (SAT), S Karthikeyan (SK), U Harish Kumar (UHK), V Santharam (VS).

ERRATA: *Pitta* # 84, April 1998, p. 3: Under *Birding Notes*, after 'Medak District', the date - "1.3" is missing.

REGIONAL REFEREES: Andhra Pradesh: A Pittie; Karnataka: JN Prasad; Kerala: PO Nameer; Maharashtra: N Jamdar; Tamil Nadu: V Santharam.

## CORRESPONDENCE

1. "Your 'report' on Field outing(s) is great and each issue should carry this. Groups could be 'halved', one 1/2 'bird-fancying' and 'enjoying' birds, the other, more serious 1/2 inventorying each habitat thoroughly each month and so updating BSAP's database. Besides waterbodies, it would be useful to survey/'trip' other major habitats, i.e., forest (Narsapur), agriculture (ICRISAT), aquatic (Manjira), stony scrub (Golconda Fort area?), urban (Osmania Univ.), etc.? Ultimately there could be more than one destination each month and results could be reported in the Indoor Meeting and then okayed and published in *Pitta*.

2. "Do not agree with Lavkumar's 'regional' plea. BSAP's target must be the Deccan Plateau, primarily, and peninsular India generally. I still believe that a biogeographical, and not political, distributional approach is needed now. District or State avifaunas have absolutely no scientific basis and can only mislead.

3. "The 2 Pintails must be feeding in water that was rich in *IRON*."

- Dr. Kumar Ghorpadé

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For more information write to: Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh, PO Box 45, Banjara Hills PO, Hyderabad 500034. India.

Editors' Note: Dr Kumar Ghorpadé's Letter will be published in the next issue of *Pitta*.

Illustrations: Sachin Jaltare: p. 1 Crested Hawk-Eagle at nest; p. 3 male Paradise Flycatcher. Shrikant W. Kolhe: p. 2 Banyan tree (Icrisat).

Editors: Aasheesh Pittie & Siraj A Taher. Membership (Rs): Admission=20; Ordinary=100, Student=25 per annum; Life=1,000. E-mail: aasheesh@hd1.vsnl.net.in.



# IP TTTA



Bulletin of the Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh

No. 84 : April 1998

## PROGRAMME

**FIELD OUTING: 19-04-1998, 8.30 a.m.:** Anantgiri Hills, Vikarabad, Rangareddi District : We request members with personal transport, willing to accommodate people, to volunteer and inform the Hon. Secretary and make the trip a success for all. This may be a full day trip and members are requested to be prepared with lunch and drinking water. We meet at bus stand at Anantgiri.

**INDOOR MEETING: 27-04-1998, 6 pm:** Talk & slide show on Tiger by Hashim Tyabji: Vidyaranya High School, Opp., Secretariat, Saifabad, Hyderabad 500004.

## NOTES & NEWS

The Society's field trip to ICRISAT campus on 1-3-1998 was a resounding success. 35 members attended and 108 species of birds were seen! Interesting birds are listed under *Birding Notes* elsewhere in this issue. The day began with members gathering near the entrance while some administrative work like taking memberships and handing out new ID cards was carried out. We boarded the ICRISAT bus and headed toward Campus Lake, a small tank close to the main buildings with a large banyan *Ficus bengalensis* in one corner. This tree is much used or abused by members of the cormorant and heron family. It bears a white-washed look from the guano and members standing downwind from it move away rapidly! A Indian Great Reed Warbler *Acrocephalus stentoreus* was singing 'stentoreously' from the thick growth of Bulrush *Typha latifolia* on the bank. There are a few settling ponds adjacent to this tank where some Shovellers *Anas clypeata* and other ducks were seen. From here we drove to Patancheru Tank which lies outside ICRISAT but shares a common boundary and birds can be watched through a chain link fence. While watching the antics of terns and searching for the albino Coot *Fulica atra* which was seen here last year, Hyder the 'raptorphil' spotted what he wished would have been a bird of prey. Alas it turned out to be a Grey Pelican *Pelecanus philippensis*, the first confirmed sighting of this species on the ICRISAT Patancheru campus! It was following 2 Painted Storks *Mycteria leucocephala* which had loafed overhead a while ago.

The birds at ICRISAT are used to vehicles and people and the fact that no harm comes to them from either. So they do not take evasive action unless hard pressed. First-timers and shutter-bugs had a field day with the colourful Roller *Coracias benghalensis* and Bluetailed Bee-Eater *Merops philippensis* which perched nonchalantly on the fencing and other perches in the campus. The third stop was at ICRISAT Lake, a large tank in the middle of the campus, which was host to a large population (>2000 birds!) of Shovellers and Brahminy duck *Tadorna ferruginea*, etc. The last stop was the Heronry at Red Tank. This heronry comprises of c. 50 Borassus Palm, which house the nests of Large Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* and Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*. Nesting of these two species overlap in time but generally does not occur simultaneously in the same tree. The cormorants had largely finished nesting—but many immature birds were to be seen. Now almost each palm had a minimum of 3 Grey Heron nests. Thus there were about 150 nests and 400+ birds! Some birds were adding twigs to their nests, some incubating, some shielding their brood from a hot sun and others bringing food for their nestlings. A few Black Ibis *Pseudibis papillosa* are known to nest in these palms too, but though a few were seen and their loud calls heard, none were seen nesting at this time. Sachin and Shrikant, our

artist members, had a busy time. Lunch followed, in the well laid-out cafeteria of the main building, after which everybody gathered on the lawns for an impromptu discussion of the day's birding. Reservations for seats were taken for the next field trip to Manjira and we ended with a vote of thanks from our President, for Dr Tom Hash and ICRISAT's management for their cooperation and assistance. All in all, a very satisfying day!

For some of us it did not end there. We had planned to bird-watch in the evening too and so Kulkarni, Tom and I stayed back. It was well worth it. It had cooled considerably and the smell of rain-enriched earth wafted on the breeze. Tom said it came from Hyderabad! True enough, when we returned, the city had had a shower. ICRISAT Lake was alive with waterfowl. Shovellers, Pintail *Anas acuta* and Common Pochard *Aythya ferina* in full breeding regalia were a wonderful sight. Among the Pintail were 2 males which had pinkish-orange instead of pure white breast and belly. We wondered whether they were specimens of a die-marked population for migratory studies or it was the result of feeding. 8 people responded to an inquiry on the Internet. Some reasons cited for this abnormality are: Feather blush which results from the deposition of small quantities of carotenoids in the feathers; staining from minerals like iron or tannins in the water.

On the far side of this 'Lake', sitting at the edge of the water, were 30 odd Marsh Harriers *Circus aeruginosus*. In fact, the harrier population at ICRISAT is 'fantastic'. As evening approached, we coasted around, counting harriers. When we stopped near some fallow fields, we counted over 150 birds roosting on the ground at a population density of about 10 birds per hectare! As darkness descended, more were winging their way low over the ground to roost within the safety ICRISAT campus provides. A conservative estimate of the roosting population of harriers within ICRISAT would be a minimum of 500 birds. *This makes it the second largest 'protected' roosting site for harriers in Andhra Pradesh and one of the prime roosting site areas for the country.* I am sure there are many thousands of acres of grasslands and wasteland where harriers must be roosting in Andhra Pradesh, of which we know nothing! [Aasheesh Pittie]

After the re-discovery of Jerdon's Courser *Rhinoptilus bitorquatus* in 1986 and Blewitt's Owlet *Athene blewittii* in 1997 it seems to be the turn of Rothschild's Parakeet *Psittacula intermedia* in 1998! Rajat Bhargava, who works for TRAFFIC-India at Delhi, claims to have found it around Dehra Dun and Nainital. He is confident that it is the Rothschild's Parakeet he has seen and none other. The only known specimens of this bird are in the American Museum of Natural His-

tory, New York (AMNH) and very little is known of its habitat, distribution, habits and behaviour. Controversies had surrounded its re-discovery in Varanasi in 1975 (specimen with BNHS, Mumbai) and a long-standing theory that *Psittacula intermedia* is a hybrid of the Roseringed Parakeet *P. krameri* and Blossomheaded or Slatyheaded Parakeet *P. cyanocephala* has not been proved either way. Rajat says that if the birds he has seen are hybrids then the specimens in AMNH should also be those of hybrid birds. "Whatever it may be, a true species or a hybrid, it is still called a 'Rothschild's Parakeet' and I have found it after 103 years. Only a DNA test will show the truth." Rajat, who is doing his Ph.D. at Aligarh Muslim University, has ample opportunity to study the *Psittacula* group of birds. He says that it is easy to miss observing this bird amongst a flock of Blossomheaded Parakeets, with which the Rothschild's Parakeet integrates, as the differences between them are few and not distinctive. He estimates a population of about 100 birds in the lower Western Himalayas and emphasizes the need for urgent conservation measures.

His love for the Parakeets (or 'Parrots' as they are commonly called), earned him the nick-name "Tota" (the Hindi word for parrot), amongst his school friends in Meerut. We will have to wait and see if the claims of this young man are proved correct. If they are, then congratulations to him! [condensed by Siraj A. Taher from *Business Standard* Saturday, 24 January 1998]

"A couple of years ago I got curious about the longest and shortest bird names, so I downloaded the Sibley and Monroe list from the web, loaded it into a spreadsheet, and sorted it by name length. There's no bird name quite as long as *Notiocryptorhynchus punctatocarunculatus* (a weevil), but the winner in the bird world, with 36 characters (including the space): *Griseotyrannus aurantioatrocristatus* Crowned Slaty Flycatcher.

"The runners up, with 31 characters: *Xiphocolaptes promeropyrhynchus* Strong-billed Woodcreeper; *Campylorhamphus trochilios-*

*tris* Red-billed Scythebill; *Phyllastrephus madagascariensis* Long-billed Greenbul; *Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus* Cactus Wren.

"The shortest bird names are: *Otus asio* Eastern Screech-Owl; *Pica pica* lack-billed Magpie; *Bubo bubo* urasian Eagle-Owl; *Mitu mitu* Alagoas Curassow; *Sula sula* Redfooted Booby; *Asio otus* Long-eared Owl; *Ara macao* Scarlet Macaw; *Apus apus* Common Swift; *Grus grus* Common Crane; *Crex crex* Corn Crane; *Anas puna* Puna Teal; *Tyto alba* Barn Owl; *Alle alle* Dovekie.

"I sorted the list by common names, too. Spaces, hyphens, and apostrophes all count as characters. The winners, with 35 characters are: *Lamprolornis elisabeth* Southern Blue-eared Glossy-Starling; *Nectarinia prigoginei* Prigogine's Double-collared Sunbird; *Nectarinia stuhlmanni* Stuhlmann's Double-collared Sunbird.

"And the runners up, with 34 characters: *Lamprolornis chalybaeus* Greater Blue-eared Glossy-Starling; *Serinus xanthopygius* Abyssinian Yellow-rumped Seedeater; *Rhinomyias addita* Streaky-breasted Jungle-Flycatcher.

"The shortest: *Prothemadera novaeseelandiae* Tui; *Dromaius novaehollandiae* Emu; *Gymnomyza samoensis* Mao; *Nestor notabilis* Kea; *Psittirostra psittacea* Ou."

[Charles W. "Will" Cook <cwcook@acpub.duke.edu>, Duke University Botany Dept., Durham, North Carolina]

Members whose membership expires on 31-3-1998 are requested to renew their membership at the new rates given below. The status of your membership is indicated on the address label of your envelope. An early renewal will prevent disappointment. Membership in Rupees: Life 1,000; Ordinary 100 p.a.; Student 25 p.a.; Corporate 2,000 (20 years); Foreign \$ 15 p.a. Student membership is available only up to 10<sup>th</sup> class. Payment should favour "Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh" and should be sent to the address at the end of this Bulletin.

#### LETTER FROM AN INSECT-HUNTING ORNITHOLOGIST—15

"The importance of bees, butterflies and a host of other insects in the cross-fertilization of flowers is well known, but the significance of birds in the same capacity has been constantly underrated. It is a subject which has hitherto received no attention whatsoever from workers in India in spite of the vast opportunities the country offers for observation and study...."

"While it is but rarely that an ornithologist also possesses sufficient competence in botany to be able to conduct research of this nature without the aid of a specialist, and vice versa, an intimate co-operation between the two is clearly indicated for obtaining optimum results."

"It must be borne in mind that the mere fact of a bird being casually seen on a flower is by itself no evidence of the fact that the flower is ornithophilous or that the bird is an agent in its cross-pollination. (Salim A. Ali, 1932, *J. Bombay nat. Hist. Soc.*, 35: 573-574)

Summer is here. I am writing this letter on *Holee* day, which natives of India believe signals the onset of the hot season in the sub-continent. Many of our flowering plants will bloom, attracting animal life of all kinds to their pollen and nectar. Perhaps the blaze of colours, in the form of powder and liquid, 'exchanged' on this festival day by humans signifies the many coloured blossoms that our flora put out in summer?

Let's put aside the matter of supposed 'effective' pollination carried out by our birds, and just look at *hard* data, on which bird species *actually* feed on floral nectaries and/or pollen loads of particular plant species. The above quotations are from Salim Ali's paper on "FLOWER-BIRDS AND BIRD-FLOWERS IN INDIA", which was one of his best works, written when he was only in his mid-thirties and had returned from a year's training under Prof. Erwin Stresemann at the Berlin University Zoological Museum in Germany. Salim Ali had then quickly chosen to go to Berlin, as opposed to London, "in the vitiated Indo-British atmosphere of the Gandhian era," in 1929. In *THE FALL OF A SPARROW* he wrote fondly of his "guru to the end," whose "simplicity and modesty, ...unassuming erudition, ...lively, almost boyish humour, and the vastness of ...scientific knowledge ..left ...a vivid impression and admiration for the man, the scientist, the mentor and the friend..." I also consider his paper on "*The Ornithology of Travancore and Cochin*" (with notes by Hugh Whistler, in 8 Parts, 1935-1937, *J.B.N.H.S.*, Vols 37-39) the best faunistic study of his lifetime. This no doubt was a direct result of his apprenticeship under Stresemann, witness his acknowledgement— "There is no doubt the Berlin proved for me the luckiest turning at the crossroads of my ornithological career. Considering that I was only an unknown and aspiring ornithologist at the time..." Such fortuitous '*kismet*' is the privilege of a select few. Mother Nature was indeed kind!

Salim Ali's 1932 paper is, sadly, still about the only 'weighty' one on birds and flowers. It is excellent reading, with 16 halftone photographs, a product of this then 'budding' cameraman as well. The available Indian database on this subject was reviewed by S. Subramanya & T.R. Radhamani (1993, *Current Science*, 65: 201-209) recently, but they omitted citing the "Forest types of India" architect H.G. Champion's (1932, *J.B.N.H.S.*, 36: 267-268) follow-up of Salim Ali's pioneering effort. Bird-flower interaction is going on now in nature, and, as Salim Ali had opined, "this branch of research lies more within the sphere of the field ornithologist than in that of the botanist..." So, bird watchers need only to collect specimens of the flowers on which bird visits are observed and obtain the specialist assistance of taxonomic



botanists to name the plant species. I do wish some readers of these Letters decide to do just this, in the pre-monsoon flowering season *now*, so that information on these aspects builds up gradually. I may also bring to attention a related topic of similar interactions, between fruit-eating birds and bird-dispersed plants, so usefully presented recently by P. Balasubramanian (1996, *J.B.N.H.S.*, 93: 428-441).

Our editors (in *Pitta* # 72, April 1997) initiated a "Project Hair-crested Drongo" last year (see *Newsletter for Birdwatchers*, 37:48, May-June 1997). The B.N.H.S. Honorary Secretary volunteered data based on their bird collection (*Pitta* # 73, May 1997) and the Rishi Valley School sent its 7-year observational data (*NLBW*, 37: 110, Nov-Dec. 1997). In this *Newsletter* issue, M.K. Himmatsinhji wrote, in some interesting detail, about his experiences with *Dicrurus hottentottus* Linnaeus. The species name is a misnomer, Linnaeus basing it on a mistaken type-locality (incorrectly "Cape of Good Hope" in S. Africa, later correctly restricted to Sikkim by Stuart Baker). Himmatsinhji writes of his ornithological credibility being established through his authentic record of this drongo in Cutch, with the support of Lavkumar Khacher and Humayun Abdulali. He mentions Stuart Baker's "Murree to Eastern Assam" distributional record (*NEW FAUNA*, 2: 370), which both Salim Ali & Ripley (*INDIAN HANDBOOK*, 5: 132) and then T.J. Roberts in his *THE BIRDS OF PAKISTAN* (Vol. 2) had ignored for Pakistan. Forest-dwelling species like the Hair-crested Drongo do wander about, moving away from the Western Ghats in peninsular India. I myself was pleasantly surprised to see a pair of Yellow-legged Green Pigeons (*Treron phoenicoptera* Latham) hanging on, through a very windy and rainy night, to a branch of a neem (*Azadirachta indica* Adrien Jussieu; Meliaceae) tree outside a fifth floor apartment window in Ahmadabad city, in May end last year. Their feet-grabbing muscle power, and ability to quietly withstand pouring rain all night, amazed me, instantly raising my respect for these pigeons! Though the Hair-crested Drongo is apparently a specialist nectar-feeder, it also takes insects which come to flowers, as a variation in its diet.

I have just returned from attending a Symposium on Social Insects, held at Mudigere on the Chikmagalur Hills. My "First impressions on the Avifauna of Mudigere, Western Ghats" appeared in the *NLBW* [17(3): 5-10, March 1977], based on my initial visit to this coffee-cardamom-planted wooded area. One morning, I took a walk with my ant-specialist colleague around the Agricultural University's Research Station and watched several birds feeding as early as 0630-0730 hrs on flowers of *Erythrina* and other forest trees. Orange Minivet, Indian and Jungle Myna, Golden Oriole, White-eye, Grey-headed and Brahminy Starling, Red-whiskered Bulbul, Purple-rumped Sunbird, Iora, Grey and Yellow-cheeked Tit, Magpie Robin, Thick-billed Flowerpecker and Black Drongo were active, and a pair of Grey Junglefowl was also 'put up', accidentally. There were several papers on social insect (especially bee) pollinators read out by delegates at the Symposium, but birds weren't even mentioned! A BIRDS-BUTTERFLIES-BOTANY (Vertebrates-Invertebrates-Plants) approach is what I would like seen implemented by people who should attempt to become *naturalists*, not just entomologists or bird watchers. We are missing the "trees for the forest", and unless our endemic *plant* species are put on *top priority* for protection, rather than just the tiger, elephant and rhinoceros, our jungles will continue to be underrated, and plundered for economic gain by a greedy or simply 'dumb' few, giving little chance for the continued survival of most of our animals in their shrinking habitats. We must *protect* (and restore) *plants and their ecosystems* if we are to succeed in 'conserving' threatened animals - this GREEN cover, in fact, allows us our very own breath of life, o.x.y.g.e.n., let's please not forget!

-- Dr. Kumar Ghorpadé

### BIRDING NOTES Compiled by Aasheesh Pittie

This column publishes birding notes in brief telegraphic form, from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra & Tamil Nadu on interesting and significant sightings and behaviour like breeding, feeding, migration, nesting, etc. Notes on flowering and fruiting trees and their relationship with birds are also welcome. English names and classification follow, S.D. Ripley's *A Synopsis of the Birds of India and Pakistan* (1982, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) and scientific nomenclature, T. Inskipp, N. Lindsey & W. Duckworth's *An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the Oriental Region* (1996). Unless specified, all observations are for 1998. Notes, Abbreviations and Contributors are at the end.

#### ANDHRA PRADESH

##### CHITTOOR DISTRICT (KK)

Waterbody on Madanapally-Anantapur main road 16.11.1997  
(near Rishi Valley School)  
COOT 30, CB 4 yng.

##### HYDERABAD DISTRICT

###### Banjara Hills (AP)

SHIKRA 01.03: PRB M disp.; VERDITER FLYCATCHER 04.02 1 M.  
Jubilee Hills 28.02 (SAK)  
BLACK REDSTART 1.

##### MEDAK DISTRICT

###### ICRISAT Asia Center, Patancheru (AP)

GREY PELICAN 1; LARGE CORMORANT; GREY HERON 400+ CB 50  
Borassus palm with c. 3 N per tree. Some N with yng.; PURPLE HERON  
8; PAINTED STORK 15; WHITENECKED STORK 42; WHITE IBIS;  
BLACK IBIS; SPOONBILL 2; LESSER WHISTLING TEAL 50;  
BRAHMINY DUCK 18; PINTAIL c. 150 in br., plm; GARGANEY 30;  
SHOVELLER c. 2500; COMMON POCHARD c. 150; COMB DUCK 1 F;  
GREATER SPOTTED EAGLE 2; PALLID, MONTAGU'S & MARSH  
HARRIER 500+ roosting; COMMON PEA FOWL 22; BLACKTAILED  
GODWIT 6; SPOTTED REDSHANK 1 coming into br plm.; RIVER  
TERN 25; BLUETAILED BEE-EATER; WIRETAILED SWALLOW CB ?  
N under culvert; INDIAN GREAT REED WARBLER 1 singing from ty-  
pha<sup>1</sup>.

#### KARNATAKA

##### BANGALORE DISTRICT<sup>2</sup>

###### Bangalore City

PARIAH KITE 16.03: CB incubating? (SK); SMALL GREEN BARBET  
16.03: POB suspected N (SK); REDWHISKERED BULBUL 15.03:  
(PAU).

###### Ramamurthynagar

HOUSE SPARROW 16.03: PRB building N (BP).

###### Silvepura

SMALL GREEN BARBET 25.02: CB (PSJ); MAGPIE ROBIN 23.02: CB,  
N with 3 eggs (CEJL).

###### Yelahanka 13.03 (BSP)

LARGE PIED WAGTAIL CB (probably Incubating).

##### BIJAPUR DISTRICT

? 04.01 (CTH)

COMMON BUSTARD-QUAIL.

##### MANDYA DISTRICT

###### Shettihalli Heronry 08.03 (JNP, AmP)

Heronry on a few Fig trees on the busy Bangalore-Mysore highway.  
LITTLE CORMORANT CB, N; GREY HERON CB, 7 N (3 Nest building  
/ reinforcing ?; 3 N with yng); NIGHT HERON CB, 4 N (2 imm).

Thailur tank 08.03

GREY PELICAN 17 fishing (JNP); PAINTED STORK 8 (JNP, AmP); BLACK IBIS 19 (JNP); BLACKTAILED GODWIT 43 (JNP, AmP); GREENSHANK 20+ (JNP); WHISKERED TERN 2 (UHK); BLACKBELLIED TERN 1 (UHK); BLUETAILED BEE-EATER 4 hawk-ing dragonflies (JNP, AmP).

### MYSORE DISTRICT

Ranganathitto Bird Sanctuary 14.03 (EHR)  
SPOONBILL CB, 1N with 3 yng.

### SHIMOGA DISTRICT

Bhadra River Project (SK)  
ASHY CROWNED FINCH LARK 10.02: PRB courting pair.; TICKELL'S FLOWERPECKER PRB N building 11.02; YELLOW THROATED SPARROW 10.02.

### TUMKUR DISTRICT

Devarayanadurga State Forest 01.03 (SK/JNP)  
YELLOWTHROATED BULBUL PRB a pair peeling pieces/fibres off dry lantana bush and carrying them in their bill to a dense un-id., bush; BLUE ROCK THRUSH 1 M.

## KERALA

### ERNAKULAM DISTRICT (VS)

Kochi<sup>3</sup> Town 21-23.01  
KOEL POB, singing; RUFOUS WOODPECKER 1 drumming; GREATER RACKET-TAILED DRONGO pair foraging on trunk of Areca-nut palm; PARADISE FLYCATCHER 1 F; MAGPIE ROBIN PRB, song & territorial flights.

### THIRUVANANTHAPURAM<sup>4</sup> DISTRICT (VS)

Thiruvananthapuram Town 18-20.01  
KOEL POB, singing.

### THRISSUR<sup>5</sup> DISTRICT (VS)

Thrissur Town 18.01  
KOEL POB, singing.

## MAHARASHTRA

### AHMEDNAGAR DISTRICT (SuK)

Pimpalgaon Reservoir 04.01  
DABCHICK 500+; PURPLE HERON 1; SPOTBILL 2; MARSH HARRIER 1; PURPLE MOORHEN 9; COOT 500+; BLACKWINGED STILT 15.  
Visapur Dam  
DABCHICK 200+; WHITENECKED STORK 1; FLAMINGO 30+; COOT 100+; BLACKWINGED STILT 15; HERRING GULL (?) 6; RIVER

TERN 3; SWALLOW 200+; CLIFF SWALLOW 200+ above water; YELLOW WAGTAIL 3; GREY WAGTAIL 3.

### AMRAVATI DISTRICT

Melghat Tiger Reserve 29.01 (AK)  
BLACKCAPPED KINGFISHER.

## TAMIL NADU

### CHENNAI DISTRICT

Chennai City (AR)  
REDBREASTED FLYCATCHER<sup>6</sup> 23.01  
Guindy National Park (VS)  
BLUETHROATED FLYCATCHER 14.12.1997: 6+ in song & territorial disp.

### NAGAPPATTINAM QUAID-E-MILLETH DISTRICT

Point Calimere Wildlife Sanctuary 05.01 (AR)  
BOOTED HAWK-EAGLE 1; WHITEBELLIED SEA EAGLE 1.

### RAMANTHAPURAM DISTRICT

Uppur 06.01 (AR)  
BLACK IBIS 7; ROSY PASTOR 50+.

### TIRUCHCHIRAPPALLI DISTRICT

Tiruchchirappalli (BHC) 19.01 (AR)  
BROWN FLYCATCHER 1.

ABBREVIATIONS: Ab-abundant; ad-adult/s; br-breeding; C-common/ly; CB-confirmed breeding; const-construction/ing; c.-approximately; disp-display/ing; F-female; flt-flight; fly-family; freq-frequent/ly; hrd-heard; id-identify/ied; imm-immature; inc-include/ing; Is-Island; juv-juvenile; LM-local migrant; M-male; mat-material; N-nest/ing/s; POB-possible breeding; PRB-probable breeding; plm-plumage; RF-Reserve Forest; Tik-Taluk; vil-village; WL-wildlife; yng-young.

CONTRIBUTORS: A. Relton (AR), Aasheesh Pittie (AP), Amitabh Pod-dar (AmP), Ashish Kothari (AK), BS Prabhakar (BSP), Bineesha P (BP), CT Hash (CTH), Chris & Eric J. Lott (CEJL), CV Aneesh (CVA), E Hanumantha Rao (EHR), JN Prasad (JNP), K Kumar (KK), PA Ullas (PAU), PS Javgal (PSJ), S Ashok Kumar (SAK), S Karthikeyan (SK), Sudhakar Kurhade (SuK), U Harish Kumar (UHK), V Santharam (VS).

#### NOTES:

<sup>1</sup> "The song may be heard sporadically all through the winter." [Handbook]

<sup>2</sup> In Pitta # 83 p. 4, Haircrested Drongo at Bannerghatta N.P. (Bangalore Dist., Karnataka), was seen on flowering Eucalyptus sp., and *Spathodea campanulata* trees.

<sup>3</sup> earlier Cochín.

<sup>4</sup> earlier Trivandrum.

<sup>5</sup> earlier Trichur.

<sup>6</sup> Not a common bird in Madras & at times confused with Bluethroated Fly-catcher, when tail pattern is clinching evidence. (VS)

REGIONAL REFEREES: Andhra Pradesh: A Pittie; Karnataka: JN Prasad; Kerala: PO Nameer; Maharashtra: N Jamdar; Tamil Nadu: V Santharam.

## CORRESPONDENCE

"Your Society's *Pitta* is interesting. I am keen that you concentrate on Andhra Pradesh. It is, as I had told you, absolutely essential that we have in-depth regional news. The intrinsic value of your and your friends' enthusiasm and effort would be considerable in the years to come. We would have, as it were, an ongoing survey of the area. Could I suggest you use the excellent bibliography you have compiled to serialize old material on the State from the *Journal* and elsewhere? Perhaps, too, you could have a sketch map showing hill ranged, plateaux, rivers and lakes and indicate where a specific article or note comes from. This would in fact be a novel content sheet...The brief bird records should be concentrated to Andhra." [Lavkumar Khacher, 646 Vastunir-man, Gandhinagar 382022]

"Did you know that we can find co-ordinates for 'most' of the localities any where in the world on Internet? Check out this Geonet website: <<http://164.214.2.59/gns/html/index.com>> or <<http://164.214.2.59/gns>> and hit the button: Access geonet. The rest is user friendly. By using wild-card (\*) search, you can download details on up to 1000 localities at a time!"

[Dr S Subramanya, Asia Division, BirdLife International, Wellbrook Court, Girton Road, Cambridge CB3 0NA, UK]

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For more information write to: Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh, PO Box 45, Banjara Hills Post Office, Hyderabad 500034, India.  
Editors: Aasheesh Pittie & Siraj A Taher. Membership (Rs): Admission=20; Ordinary=100, Student=25 per annum; Life=1,000. E-mail: aasheesh@hd1.vsnl.net.in.



## PROGRAMME

**FIELD OUTING: 21-06-1998, 7.30 a.m.: Chilkur Deer Park:** We request members with personal transport, willing to accommodate people, to volunteer to the Hon. Secretary and make the trip a success. We meet inside, near the huts.

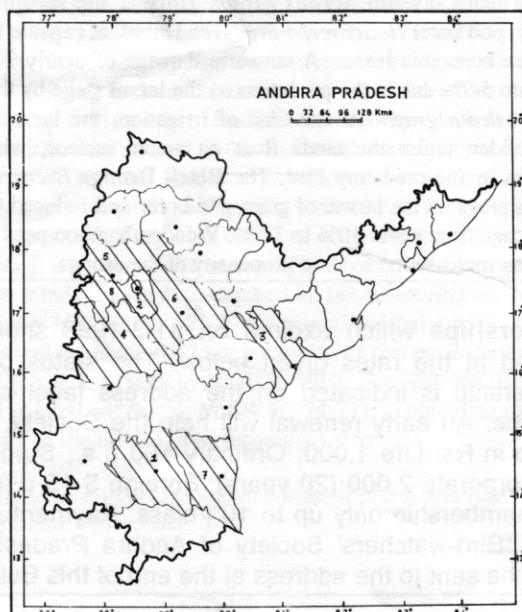
**INDOOR MEETING: 15-06-1998, 6 p.m.: "Birds of Zimbabwe," a talk by Humayun Taher.** Vidyaranya High School, Opposite Secretariat, Saifabad, Hyderabad 500004.

## NOTES & NEWS

The **Asian Waterfowl Census** conducted by the members of the BSAP, AP Forest Department and other birdwatchers of the state early this year, was quite a success. A gist of the data is given below. 23 participants (whose forms reached the coordinator) counted a total of 3,32,396 waterfowl at 26 sites, in 8 districts of Andhra Pradesh, representing 59 species.

| BIRD GROUPS              | NUMBERS  |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Grebes                   | 1,435    |
| Pelicans*                | 390      |
| Cormorants & Darters     | 15,146   |
| Hérons & Egrets          | 48,451   |
| Storks                   | 30,945   |
| Ibises & Spoonbills      | 4,331    |
| Flamingos                | 12,325   |
| Geese & Ducks            | 1,86,883 |
| Cranes                   | ---      |
| Rails, Gallinules, Coots | 16,397   |
| Finfoots & Jacanas       | 808      |
| Shorebirds               | 13,115   |
| Gulls & Terns            | 2,170    |

\* The pelicanry at Nelapattu Bird Sanctuary was not counted this year, hence the number of pelicans is very few. A December 1997 report mentions of 400+ nesting birds present there.



Districts covered in Andhra Pradesh during the AWC 1998

| S. No. | District    | No. of Sites |
|--------|-------------|--------------|
| 1      | Cuddapah    | 1            |
| 2      | Hyderabad   | 1            |
| 3      | Krishna     | 2            |
| 4      | Mahbubnagar | 1            |
| 5      | Medak       | 2            |
| 6      | Nalgonda    | 1            |
| 7      | Nellore     | 13           |
| 8      | Rangareddi  | 5            |

22 March 1998 was a warm and sunny morning. Mr Qamar Mohammed Khan, DFO Medak, was waiting at the Panjagutta cross-roads. Members kept trickling in and we finally left at 8.30 a.m. for a day's birding to **Manjira Reservoir** which we reached around 10 a.m. A quick cup of tea and we all trooped to the back of the Environment Centre to see the feeding of crocodiles. It was fascinating to watch the seemingly quiet and docile creatures suddenly erupt into action the moment they saw the keeper bringing in the bucket of meat. After the thrill and some photography, we went towards the lower barrage to go to the temporary boat jetty. The original jetty was dry all round as there was little water in the reservoir and we could not walk along the barrage as there were two huge bee-hives above the gates! Despite all the care and detour, it was slippery on the mossy stones and we were all fortunate to get to the other side except for Moorty and Walter, who slipped but got up smiling! Looking down the river (stream would be more appropriate!) we spotted 12 Brahminy Duck and a couple of Spotbills. The usual Pond Herons, Cattle and Little Egrets were also there and a few Pariah Kites circled above. While a Pied Kingfisher was hovering above for its breakfast of "fish-n-fish", two Little Cormorants were sunning on the rocks. Somebody spotted a Large Cormorant on a projection over the barrage gate and there were 2 Bluetailed Bee-Eaters, probably feasting on the occupants of the hives. Swallows weren't far behind and 2 species, Common and Wiretailed, were seen flying around along with Dusky Crag Martins, in a separate flock. By now the boatman, Mallesh, was ready with the boat, life-jackets and all, and very soon the boat was full of excited members looking forward to an enjoyable boat ride. There was excitement all around when they returned (no problems with the boat though) - for the birds sighted. Openbill and Painted Storks and also the Whitenecked. While one was delighted having seen the White Ibis, another was excited about having seen the Purple Moorhen, the Purple Heron and the Grey Heron. This geared up the next group and they piled into the boat. They returned after an hour, no less ecstatic. Someone spotted a nightjar on a branch but the species could not be determined. Night Herons in fair numbers and a lot of abandoned Baya nests were seen. So was a Cotton Teal. Meanwhile, Qamar Mohammed, another person and I were sitting on the bund, under a shade, and were rewarded with the sighting of a Brahminy Kite, an Osprey, a lone Demoiselle Crane and 2 Kestrels. To twist a famous poetic line, 'they also serve, who sit and watch'. It was getting rather hot as we returned to the Environmental Cen-

tre. A wash, lunch and then a film on Manjira (Telugu commentary). When notes were compared, the tally of species stood at 52. Next day we read that the mercury stood at 42°C on that wonderful Sunday! - Siraj A Taher.

A letter from Taej Mundkur, Coordinator, Waterbird Conservation Programme of Wetlands International (based at Malaysia), brings some mixed news. The good news first! "I am pleased to inform you that the **Asian Waterfowl Census 1994-96 report** is finally printed.... The report will be mailed out directly from the printers in Bangalore, India, to coordinators and participants of the 1994, 1995 and 1996 census within the next week or so." So, all those of you who have taken part in this census, will finally receive the long awaited report! The bad news is, "Compared to other parts of the world, Asia is quoted as having the highest percentage (%) of decreasing populations, lowest % of stable populations and the lowest % of populations with known trends (along with Oceania). This should be an incentive for all of us to work together to improve the information on the conservation status of these birds."

"The **Wildlife Institute of India** has begun a project concerning the ecology of the **Sarus Cranes**. It will look into the aspect of land use change within the range of the species and determine if this has had any effects on the behaviour and ecology of the Cranes. This is especially pertinent since several surveys indicate that the population of this majestic bird has plummeted to very low numbers in the past years. In this matter, we would appreciate your help. We are compiling a data base of all sightings of the Sarus Crane since 1995 from anyone who has done any birdwatching and noted down the presence of the species. The data will be of immense use and we would like to have the location of sighting, site description, number of birds sighted and any other information that will be of use in the project. The information will be duly acknowledged in all reports and publications." Questionnaires are available with B C Choudhury, Scientist, Wildlife Institute of India, Post Box # 18, Chandrabani, Dehradun 248001.

"The famous expert on Sri Lankan avifauna," Layard, "described the first specimen of the flycatcher (now popularly called **Layard's flycatcher** *Muscicapa muttui*) in 1854 in the *Annals and Magazine of Natural History* series 2, 13(74): 127. After the usual scientific account on the bird, Layard writes: "I name this new species after my old and attached servant Muttu, to whose patient perseverance and hunting skill I owe so many of my best birds. This one he brought in one morning at Pt. Pedro in the month of June..." This article was from a series of papers Layard authored in the aforementioned journal in 1853-54 entitled *Notes on the Ornithology of Ceylon, collected during an eight years' residence in the island*. [R Kannan in *Hornbill* 1996, No. 2: 9.]

That wild birds can be as fearless of humans, as is described below, seems impossible. But it is true on some islands of the **Galapagos** archipelago.

"The finches are much more afraid of hawks and owls than they are of us," **Peter Grant** tells friends in Princeton. "When we walk up to them, the birds keep doing what they are doing; but when an owl comes near, they head for a cactus tree. A little while ago Rosemary was crossing a treeless spot. An owl flew over, and finches flew up from all around and landed on Rosemary!

"They are always perching on our shoulders, our arms, our heads. Sometimes when I am measuring one, a few others land up and down my wrists and arms to watch. I was looking out to sea with binoculars once, and a hawk landed on my hat. We have a picture of it."

"Or you pick up a bamboo pole, set it over your shoulder, and begin to carry it," says Rosemary. "Suddenly the pole is very heavy. Then you turn around and see that you have a hawk hitching a ride on the back of it."

"I used to have a wart on my back, although it is gone now," says Peter. "A small black wart, up near the right shoulder. I went around in just shorts in those days, and on Genovesa (one of the islands), finches would peck at the wart."

"What a difference!" says one veteran of the finch watch, Dolph Schluter. "In Kenya, finches flush as much as 30 meters away. In the Galapagos, the birds land on the rim of your coffee cup. If there's only a little coffee left in there, they will land right inside it and take a sip. You can put your hand over it, and measure the bird. Mockingbirds on Genovesa would pick at our shoelaces. On the really isolated islands like Wolf, you could catch the birds by hand. Just reach out your hand and grab them."

Peter, camping in Shiraz, had once spotted a pair of nuthatches feeding near a rock. He put a few nuts on the rock, and hid himself, hoping to observe the birds' beaks and feeding behavior at close range. Although he waited three hours, the birds did not come back. ("It would be better to use caged birds," Peter noted tersely in his report.) But on Daphne the most famous beaks in the world were tapping him on the shoulder. He had **Darwin's** finches perching on his knee, studying him. [Weiner, Jonathan (1995): *The Beak of the Finch: Evolution in Real Time*. Vintage.]

"A suggestion of interest to foresters has been made that a greater variety of trees in the **plantations** would provide additional food in winter for those birds best able to control or at least stabilise insect populations. Tits in winter take an appreciable proportion of the invertebrate population and one can calculate that each bird examines 1,100 trees every day and needs 5 mg. or the equivalent of 24 average-sized insects every minute of the day to keep itself alive! Coal and willow tits store food in autumn, but this forms only a very small part of their diet. In mid-winter coal tits have to feed for about 90% of a nine-hour day. On the principle that the smaller the species the longer the time required each day for feeding, goldcrests much feed for nearly 100% of the time.....

"These areas (orchards) represent an important ecotone for birds, but their importance will be affected by whether the orchards have herbage only beneath the trees, or fruit bushes or ploughed land, as well as by the age and treatment of the fruit trees. Orchards are sometimes turned into unstable communities by man's interference with the ecological balance. Although it may be tempting to overestimate the value of birds in controlling pests, a serious break in the ecological chain at the lower levels may render the trees more liable to attack by insect pests. Invasions most often come to cultivated land or to land greatly modified by man's multifarious practices. **Orchards** are therefore extremely valuable for ecological studies since man's economic needs are also involved." [Simms, Eric (1990): *Woodland Birds*. Bloomsbury Books, London.]

A recent study [Malik, Y.P. (1998): Birds: An eco-friendly approach for insect-pests management in Linseed. *Insect Environment* 3(4): 104.] brings to light some positive aspects of **economic ornithology**. "Linseed *Linum usitatissimum* L. has a number of insect-pests, among which Cutworm *Agrotis ipsilon* Hfn., at the seedling stage and gram pod borer *Helicoverpa armigera* Hubn., at capsule formation, cause economic losses. A cutworm damage of nearly 20% was reduced to 5-7% due to the predation on the larval stage by the **Pond Heron** *Ardeola grayii*. At the time of irrigation, the larvae of cutworm hidden under the clods float on water surface, which are picked-up by the predatory bird. The **Black Drongo** *Dicrurus macrocercus* preys on the larvae of gram pod borer and reduced the capsule damage from about 10% to 3-5%. Wooden/bamboo pegs used as perch may increase the feeding propensity of the drongo.

**Memberships** which expired on 31-3-1998 should be renewed at the rates given below. The status of your membership is indicated on the address label of your envelope. An early renewal will help the Society. Membership in Rs: Life 1,000; Ordinary 100 p.a.; Student 25 p.a.; Corporate 2,000 (20 years); Foreign \$ 15 p.a.; Student membership only up to 10<sup>th</sup> class. Payment should favour "Bird-watchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh" and should be sent to the address at the end of this Bulletin.



## LETTER FROM AN INSECT-HUNTING ORNITHOLOGIST—16

"A bird is different from an aeroplane, although both fly through the air." (p. 9)

".... if our brains were to work like traditional computers it would take us about two days to get dressed, a week to make breakfast and a week to get to work." (p. 12)

"The mind can see only what it is prepared to see." (p. 17)

".... 'intelligence' [which is gene-based—K.G.] is the potential of the mind and the way this is put into operation is thinking skill." (p. 16)

"The relationship between intelligence and thinking is similar to that between a car and the driver." (p. 19)

"We need to shift from cleverness to wisdom. Perception is the basis of wisdom." (p. 27)

"Aristotle said that all new knowledge comes from existing knowledge." (p. 181)

"I looked out across the valley at the beginning of the Alps. I noticed a hawk circling overhead. For twenty minutes the hawk glided without once flapping its wings. The hawk knew the system perfectly and moved from on thermal up-draught to another. Human para-gliders descended to the valley floor in just two minutes. Knowing the system makes a difference." (p. 51) (Edward de Bono, 1990, *I Am Right—You Are Wrong*. From this to the New Renaissance: From Rock Logic to Water Logic. xx+293 pp., Penguin Books, Delhi)

Five hundred years ago, this very month, a Portuguese voyager Vasco da Gamma ( see Letter 9, Pitta # 77, Sept. 1997) sailed around the Cape of Good Hope and 'discovered' India for the Europeans. I believe this initiated a kind of Renaissance—the re-birth of learning—in our sub-continent, when paper making (which the Chinese taught the Arabs and they the Europeans) and printing introduced by Europeans revolutionized our life-style and our thinking. This Letter is an unstinted *encomium* of this great navigator, discoverer, and of his landing at Calicut (Kozhikode in native tongue) in May 1498, and what followed from Europe as a 'fall out' of this achievement.

On October 7, 1967 a dear school-mate of mine, who was one of my early companions on 'bird walks', presented me with a book I treasure to this day. This was James Fisher's *A History of Birds* (1954, Hutchinson's University Library, London, 208 pp.), one of the many 'Fisherian' literary masterpieces that conditioned my ornithological upbringing in the days of The Beatles, of a richer, more tasteful, Hindostani Cinema and of my heroes playing Test Cricket. Fisher wrote that "the first printed book on animals was published before 20th July, 1467 in Strasburg (an edition of the *Sermonum Proprietate* of Rabanus Maurus)", and went on to elaborate that "If example be needed of the impact of the Age of Print and Science upon the world, the transformation of the list of recorded British birds in the sixteenth century is a good one, for it was nearly doubled, rising, as I have it in my collection of names, from eighty to 138 [some 450 species have now been recorded from Great Britain and Ireland—K.G.]. More than half the fifty-eight 'new' birds were contributed by William Turner [1500-1568], the father of British ornithology, whose *Avium Praecipuarum* was published in Cologne in 1544, the first printed bird book...." Another Fisherian masterpiece, in collaboration with the painting skill of Roger Tory Peterson, that I acquired in the 1960s, was their magnificent *The World of Birds*: A comprehensive guide to general ornithology (1964, Macdonald & Co., London, 288 pp.).

The philosophical quotations above are taken from a book I found lying around in my Desktop Printer's office, on a day I had to wait my turn at their computers. The opportunity that availed itself was seized and I spent much of the next hour speed-reading and making notes from this very interesting book by Edward de Bono. He feels the time is now right for a 'New Renaissance', which will lift us from a rigid 'Rock Logic' to a free flowing 'Water Logic'. He writes that the last renaissance was clearly based on the rediscovery of ancient Greek thinking habits (about 400 BC) of logic, reason, argument, truth and the importance of man. Before this, our thinking was based on dogma and theology. Feudalism, the shameless exploitation of the peasantry, was getting out of date, and the renaissance brought in a reformation which was a revolt against the Roman Church. It also triggered a revolution, a political struggle of the *bourgeoisie* ('middle class') to control the power of the kings who ruled them. De Bono thinks that a new renaissance will supplant the 24 centuries-old logic of reason with the intelligence of perception. I also believe we are now ready for just such a new renaissance, to be ushered in with perception and wisdom, taking utmost care to *select* only what we really need and can absorb and digest, and rejecting most of the 'hi-tech, hi-life' carrots that the developed 'West' is dangling before us. We developing countries (mostly tropical) cannot afford their urban lifestyle; their fighting the cold there with excessive burning of fuel, gas, electrical and atomic energy.

Readers may wonder what I am doing with a letter meant for bird watchers. Let me explain. Like there is no Science without Philosophy (a Ph.D. is a degree in Philosophy!), there really can be no effective bird watching by itself without awareness of history (natural and human), geography, art, culture, etc. We are now in an Information Age but, no computer can ever match the human brain (or even 'animal instinct'). We must be careful (1) not to get bamboozled by this overflow of available data on CD-Roms or Internet Websites and (2) in learning quickly the means to *select* and summarize the 'grain from the chaff' of this information explosion.

Coming back to Calicut and the hopeful renaissance of ornithological research in South Asia, two scientists at the National Research Centre for Spices (for whose trade Europeans came to India; though the real 'Spice Islands' are the Moluccas of present Indonesia) have written on bird-flowers noticed in this historical coastal city and at Peruvannamuzhi in the Wynad. Devasahayam & Rema (1994, *NLBW* 33: 103-105) wrote of 16 plant species whose flowers were visited by birds in Kerala, of which 5 species were additions to the 93 flowering plants listed by Subramanya & Radhamani, visited by 58 bird species (These numbers do not even cover 1% of our plant species and just over 4% of our bird species!). They also observed a maximum of bird visitors on flowers of *Bombax ceiba* Linnaeus (Bombacaceae) and on *Erythrina variegata* L. var. *orientalis* Merrill (Fabaceae), but I have not seen the publications in which these have been "reported elsewhere". Another scientist, a lady, has also researched on nectar-feeding birds and avian pollinators of parasitic mistletoes (Loranthaceae) (see Priya Davidar, 1985, *J.B.N.H.S.* 82: 45-60). P. Kannan submitted a M.Sc. thesis on Ornithophily to the University of Bombay in 1966, dealing with flower-birds around Bombay, but I am not aware of this paper being published, though one on "Nectar-feeding adaptations of Flowerbirds" appeared in the *J.B.N.H.S.* (75: 1036-1050) in 1980. The BIBLIOGRAPHIC INDEX (1995) compiled by Aasheesh Pittie is unfortunately of little help, as I had pointed out (1996, *NLBW* 36: 74-77), in obtaining most published works on subjects like Pollination by birds, or Food of birds, which latter will be the topic of a forthcoming Letter.

— Dr. Kumar Ghorpadé

[Errata in Letter # 15 -- Line 9 from bottom of p. 2 should read "There is no doubt that Berlin", and Line 3 of last paragraph should read "coffee+cardamom—planted wooded area".]

**BIRDING NOTES** *Compiled by Aasheesh Pittie*

This column publishes birding notes in brief telegraphic form, from **Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra & Tamil Nadu** on interesting and significant sightings and behaviour like breeding, feeding, migration, nesting, etc. Notes on flowering and fruiting trees and their relationship with birds are also welcome. English names and classification follow, S.D. Ripley's *A Synopsis of the Birds of India and Pakistan* (1982, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) and scientific nomenclature, T. Inskipp, N. Lindsey & W. Duckworth's *An Annotated Checklist of the Birds of the Oriental Region* (1996). Unless specified, all observations are for 1998. Abbreviations, Contributors, Notes, Regional Referees, etc., are at the end.

**ANDHRA PRADESH****CHITTOOR DISTRICT****Rishi Valley (SR) 11.3**

LITTLE EGRET POB, 3 in br., plm; COLLARED SCOPS OWL 1; MOTTLED WOOD OWL 1; GREY DRONGO 2; PARADISE FLYCATCHER 1 F; WHITETHROATED GROUND THRUSH 1; LARGE PIED WAGTAIL CB, 2 ad., 2 yng.

**HYDERABAD DISTRICT****Banjara Hills**

SPOTTED DOVE 9.5: CB, N with 3 eggs in bougainvillea, 1 laid on consecutive days. 11.5: N destroyed by strong wind. 13.5 PRB, pair const., N in same place (SAT); PLAINTIVE CUCKOO 25.4: 1 F, hepatic phase. Hawking insects like flycatchers, from top of tree (AP); BLACKNAPED BLUE FLYCATCHER 22.4: 1 F hunting inside canopy of fruiting mango tree (AP).

**Hyderabad City (HJ)**

SHIKRA 2.3: Sunning on ground.; REDHEADED MERLIN 6.5: 1 at Imli-ban Bus Stand (Central bus stand).

**KARNATAKA****BANGALORE DISTRICT****Bangalore City**

BRAHMINY KITE 29.4: 1 imm., N destroyed by heavy rain on 25.4, United Theological College (JNP); SCAVENGER VULTURE 12.2: 2, St. Joseph's College (JNP); SMALL GREEN BARBET 29.4: POB, United Theological College (DJ); INDIAN MYNA 29.4: POB, 1 N (JNP); JUNGLE MYNA 29.4: POB, 4 N (JNP); BLACK HEADED CUCKOO SHRIKE 29.4: United Theological College (JNP); MAGPIE ROBIN 9.5: CB, N in N-box, Sadashivnagar (FS); GREY TIT 21.4: 2 inspecting N-box (JNP).

**Kadugodi/Whitefield Area (KVS)**

PARIAH KITE 17.4: CB, N with 1 nestling; REDWATTLED LAPWING 14.4: CB, N with 4 eggs, incubating; SPOTTED OWLET 30.4; WHITEBREASTED KINGFISHER 29.4: CB, ad., feeding nestlings; ROLLER 16.4: CB, ad., feeding nestlings; HOOPOE 17.4: CB, ad., feeding 2 yng., outside N; CRIMSONBREASTED BARBET 17.4: CB, incubating; SMALL GREEN BARBET 16.4: CB, ad., feeding nestlings; SINGING BUSH LARK 20.4: CB, N with 4 nestlings fed by ad.; WIRETAILED SWALLOW 26.4: CB, N const.; REDRUMPED SWALLOW 20.4: PRB, N const.; BLACK DRONGO 18.4: CB, incubat-

ing; INDIAN MYNA 18.4: N bldg; JUNGLE MYNA 18.4: N bldg; TREE PIE 17.4: CB, incubating; JUNGLE CROW 26.4: CB, incubating; WHITEBROWED BULBUL 18.4: CB, N with 1 egg & 1 nestling. Ad., feeding yng; INDIAN ROBIN 22.4 CB, N with 1 nestling & 2 eggs, ad., incubating; PADDYFIELD PIPIT 26.4: CB, 1 N with 2 eggs, ad., incubating; LARGE PIED WAGTAIL 26.4: CB, ad., feeding yng; HOUSE SPARROW 15.4: POB, incubating; WHITETHROAT-ED MUNIA 14.4 CB, N with 7 eggs, incubating.

**Indiranagar (VK)**

HOOPOE 5.4: (becoming very rare in Bangalore) National Institute of Advanced Studies; SMALL GREEN BARBET 16.4: CB, ad., feeding fledgling with Singapore Cherry.

**Sadashivnagar (AmP)**

NIGHT HERON 1.5: CB, 15 with imm., at heronry nearer Sankey Tank. Many const., N.; PIED CRESTED CUCKOO 1 golf course.

**Vasanthnagar (RK, JH, C, JNP)**

Magpie Robin 26.4: POB, M Singing & frequently visiting a chimney pipe.

**Badamanavarthe State Forest/Valley School 10.5**

BLACKHEADED CUCKOO-SHRIKE tail moulting (JNP); BLACK DRONGO PRB, ad., carrying N-matl (MRR); PURPLE SUNBIRD CB, F feeding 2 yng in N in Eresid spiders colony c. 3' from ground (JG)

**KOLAR DISTRICT**

LESSER PIED KINGFISHER 3.4 11 on a wire (VK).

**MANDYA DISTRICT 29.3 (PCG, DK)****Kokrebellur Bird Sanctuary**

GREY PELICAN 13 orphaned/injured nestlings saved at Kokrebellur pelican pen by volunteers of Hejjarle Balaga (Pelican Conservation Group).

**ABBREVIATIONS:** Ab-abundant; ad-adult/s; br-breeding; C-common/ly; CB-confirmed breeding; const-construction/ing; c.-approximately; disp-display/ing; F-female; flt-flight; fly-family; freq-frequent/ly; hrd-heard; id-identify/ied; imm-immature; inc-include/ing; Is-Island; juv-juvenile; LM-local migrant; M-male; mat-material; N-nest/ing/s; POB-possible breeding; PRB-probable breeding; plm-plumage; RF-Reserve Forest; Tlk-Taluk; vil-village; WL-wildlife; yng-young.

**CONTRIBUTORS:** A Pittie (AP); Chaitanya (C); D Jathanna (DJ); D Karan (DK); J Griffes (JG); J Hemanth (JH); JN Prasad (JNP); H Jaffer (HJ); KV Srinivas (KVS); MR Raghavendra (MRR); Pelican Conservation Group (PCG); Rajkumar (RK); SA Taher (SAT); S Riyazuddin (SR); Vijay Kiyawat (VK).

**REGIONAL REFEREES:** Andhra Pradesh: A Pittie; Karnataka: JN Prasad; Kerala: PO Nameer; Maharashtra: N Jamdar; Tamil Nadu: V Santharam.

**OBITUARY**

**Dr. Charles G. Sibley:** Born 7 August 1917, Fresno, California, died 12 April 1998, Santa Rosa, California. During his lifetime, Dr. Sibley held many eminent teaching and administrative posts in famous American universities and bird-related organizations. Among these are the Universities of California, Kansas, Yale, Cornell and San Francisco. He was a member of ca. 15 scientific societies, U.S. and foreign; Fellow, Honorary or Corresponding Fellow of Seven; officer or council member of five - 1946-present. He was a Guggenheim Fellow, 1959-60; Treasurer, American Ornithologists' Union (AOU), 1953-62; President, AOU, 1986-88; Secretary-General of the 13<sup>th</sup> International Ornithological Congress (IOC), 1958-62 and President of the 20<sup>th</sup> IOC, 1986-1990. Besides this he was on the editorial boards of many technical journals. His publications since 1939 include 132 titles, of which 77 pertain to molecular systematics and evolution. But his most lasting and important contribution to the ornithological world were the three books he co-authored, dealing with the DNA-based classification of birds.

"Phylogeny and Classification of Birds" (with Jon Ahlquist). Yale Univ. Press. 1990.

"Distribution and Taxonomy of Birds of the World" (with Burt Monroe). Yale Univ. Press. 1990.

"A World Checklist of Birds" (with Burt Monroe). Yale Univ. Press. 1993.

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For more information write to: Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh, PO Box 45, Banjara Hills PO, Hyderabad 500034. India.

Errata: The note on BSAP's Anantagiri trip (Pitta # 85, May 1998, p. 1) was written by Hashim Tyabji.

Editors: Aasheesh Pittie & Siraj A Taher. Membership (Rs): Admission=20; Ordinary=100; Student=25 per annum; Life=1,000. E-mail: aasheesh@hd1.vsnl.net.in.



## Delhi bird club

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101/4 kaushalya park  
hauz khas new delhi-110 016

phone: 663607 fax: 6864614  
e-mail: biks@giasdl01.vsnl.net.in

31 July, 1996

Dear all,

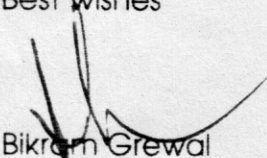
I think we had a very successful meeting of the club and we should all thank Otto for showing us his wonderful pictures.

The next meeting has been fixed for the Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> of August at 7am. We should all meet at the car park of the Mahavir Vanasthali Gardens on Simon Bolivar Marg. This is the road that connects Chanakyapuri (past the side of the American Embassy and cutting across Sardar Patel Marg) to the Ridge Road.

Rupin Dang, who knows the ridge extensively has agreed to lead the team.

Should you require any more information, please do not hesitate to get in touch with Ravi or myself.

Best wishes



Bikram Grewal

## Delhi Bird Club

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101/4 kaushalya park  
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e-mail: biks@glasdl01.vsnl.net.in

18 November, 1996

Dear friends,

Let me start by apologising for the long silence. This was partly because we thought it best we postpone any activity till the threat of Dengue had subsided.

We should now plan to meet on the Sunday the 1<sup>st</sup> of December at Okhla on the barrage on the Delhi side at 7am. We can then chalk out the winter's programme.

It was a good year for the Delhi Bird Club, specially with the re-discovery of the Bristled Grassbird. Unfortunately, the untimely death of Jasjit Man Singh's daughter and grand daughter by mushroom poisoning caused great grief to all of us. I am sure you will all join me in condoling with the family.

I look forward to seeing you soon.



Bikram Grewal



## Delhi bird club

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phone: 660607 fax: 6864614  
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August 12, 1996

Dear Friends

Sorry for the short notice but we all are planning to meet at Okhla under the Banyan Tree on Sunday the 18<sup>th</sup> of August at 6.30am.

Two Bristled Grassbirds have been seen there last week. This is an important event as they are extremely rare and the last and only sighting in Delhi was in 1967.

Let us hope they are still there

Looking forward to seeing you there.

Best



Bikram Grewal

# Delhi bird club

101/4 kaushalya park  
hauz khas new delhi-110 016

phone: 660607 fax: 6864614  
e-mail: biks@giasd101.vsnl.net.in

3 March 1997

Dear All,

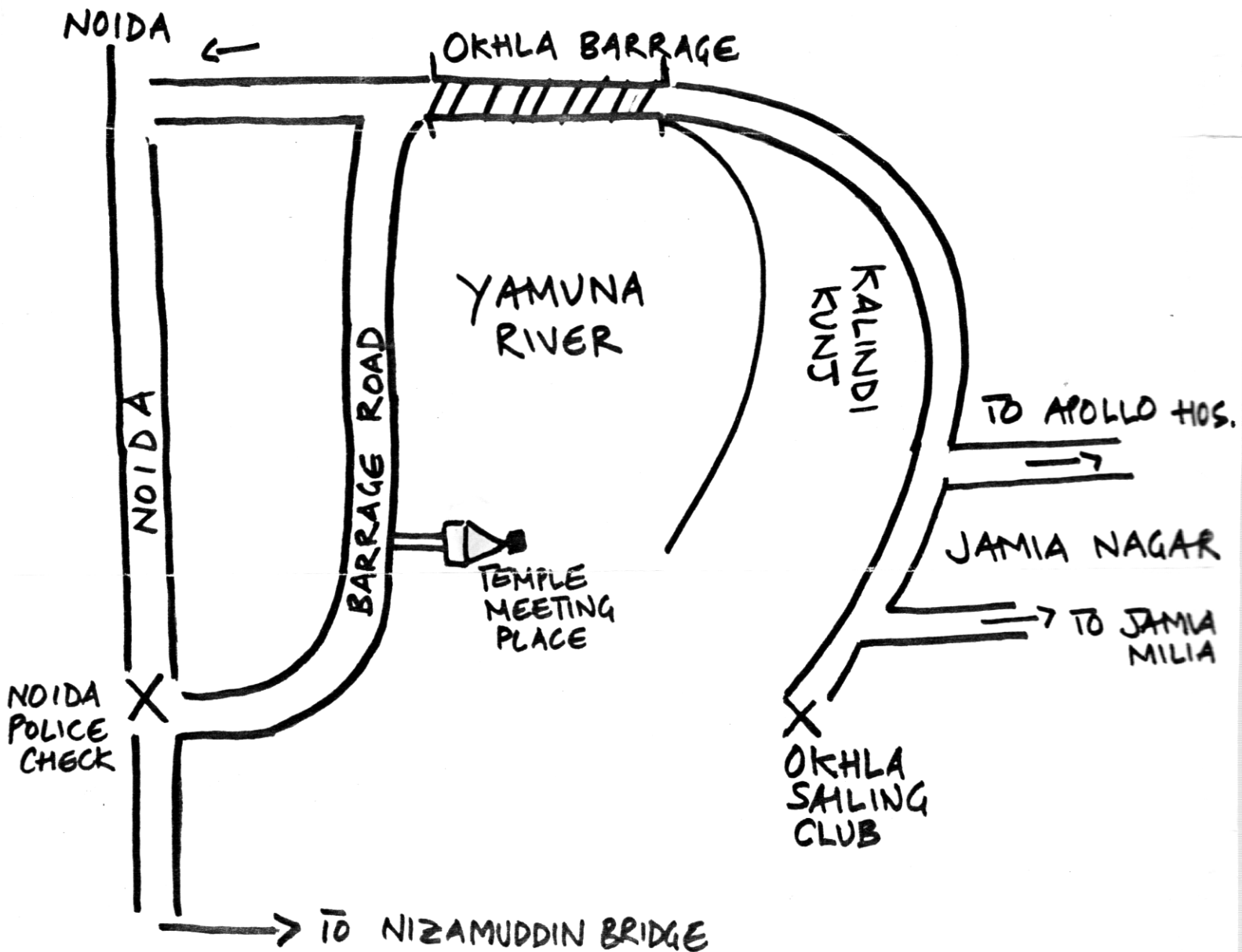
Thank you all for coming to Tughlakabad Fort on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March. It was good to see everyone again as well meeting some new bird watchers.

The Delhi Bird Club has decided to meet next on Sunday, the 16<sup>th</sup> of March at the Okhla Barrage at 7:00 AM. The meeting point will be at the temple on the Barrage Road. For the newcomers I am enclosing a rough map of how to get there.

See you then

  
Bikram Grewal

## ROUGH MAP OF OKHLA BARRAGE





## A BIBLIOGRAPHIC INDEX TO THE ORNITHOLOGY OF THE INDIAN SUBCONTINENT

(May 01)

*Aasheesh Pittie*

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### Dedication.

I dedicate this database to all those people whose lives have been changed by birds found in and around the Indian subcontinent, and who have taken the trouble to share their experiences, through various media, with others. I hope that this compilation contributes in facilitating the study of these wonderful co-habitants of planet Earth, and in the process, we learn a bit more on how to survive our own environmental follies.

### Introduction.

When I began collecting and indexing references on the Ornithology of the Indian subcontinent way back in the late Seventies, I had not even dreamt that the database would evolve into its present form. Its mandate today is to record all that has been and will be written on the birds of the Indian subcontinent and the countries surrounding it. This database lists more than 18,000 works on the Ornithology of this area and is growing every day with the help of innumerable well-wishers. Some however stand out in their contribution and to these gentlemen I give special thanks. Suhel Quader introduced me to *Papyrus*<sup>1</sup> and its advantages and initially transferred my D-Base files into this software. Kumar Ghorpadé, Edward Dickinson, Tim Inskipp, Krys Kazmierczak and Siraj A. Taher, have been critics and friends and have over the years helped tune the database so much finer. To my wife Smriti and my children Prakriti and Prashast, who have always been puzzled by the amount of typing I do on the computer, thanks and gratitude, are trivial and insubstantial words that limit my feelings towards them. There are many things I'd like to say to these people and about them, but here let me just say, "Thank you for supporting this small project."

### 1. Acknowledgements.

Some friends who helped with the database are:

Andrew Robertson  
Bill Harvey  
Bombay Natural History Society  
library staff  
Desmond Allen  
Dhirendra Devarshi  
Girish Kumar  
Hashim Tyabji  
Humayun Abdulali  
Isaac Kehimkar  
J.N. Prasad  
Jafer Palot  
Joe Tobias  
Kamlesh Gandhi  
Krishnadev Rao

Librarian and staff of the Osmania  
University's Department of Zoology  
library.  
Paul Holt  
Ragupathy Kannan  
Rishad Naoroji  
S. Sridhar  
S. Subramanya  
S.A. Hussain  
S.G. Neginhal  
V. Nagulu  
V. Santharam  
Vasudev Rao  
Zafar Futehally

### 2. Installing and Running the Database.

- a. Your CD-Rom contains legal versions of *Papyrus Retriever*<sup>TM</sup>, "PAPR" and its documentation, "PAPRDOC", (as executable or application files), 8 files with the extension "BIB" and 4 MS Word document file with the extension "DOC".
- b. Create a new Folder called **INDIABIB** on your hard disc.

- c. Copy all files from the CD-Rom to this folder.
- d. Change the **PROPERTIES** of the files by removing their **READ ONLY** status. To do this, highlight all the files after they have been copied to the hard disc. Click the right button of your Mouse on any of the highlighted files. Left-click on **PROPERTIES** in the drop-down menu. In the resulting box, click on the tick-mark against **READ ONLY**. It will disappear. Click on **OK** to save.
- e. To run the programme, double click on the application **PAPR.EXE**.
- f. The programme will open and run in **DOS** mode.
- g. You should maximize the size of the screen for convenience by clicking the button on the top right hand corner of the Papyrus screen.
- h. For unresolved problems contact me at [aasheesh@hdl.vsnl.net.in](mailto:aasheesh@hdl.vsnl.net.in).

### 3. What does the index cover?

- a. This keyword-based bibliographic index covers the Indian Subcontinent, which for the purposes of this work consists of the areas within the political boundaries of the following countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, India, Maldiv Islands, Nepal, Pakistan and, Sri Lanka. In addition, Tibet is also covered.

### 4. How to use the programme—brief summary.

- a. It is advisable to read the MS Word document **PAPRDOC** before using the programme. However, if you wish to dive right in, go ahead! Papyrus is quite user-friendly and a breeze once you get the hang of it.
- b. The programme opens with **SEARCH** highlighted. Press **Enter** on your keyboard to select **SEARCH** and proceed. Simple guidelines are given on the **SEARCH** screen.
- c. If you are elsewhere on the Main Menu, press the **ESC** button to return to the opening screen and then search for references by typing '**S**' or clicking on **SEARCH**.
- d. Using the **LIST** key is another way of searching and outputting to printer, screen or file, if there is only one or part of one parameter to be searched. Try it. Its user friendly and leads you on.
- e. The **ESC** key gets you out of most sticky situations.
- f. You cannot add or deduct information to or from the database.

### 5. Keywords are based on:

- a. The name of a place (site) or area. This could well be a wetland, sanctuary, national park, city, district, state, country, *etc.*
- b. Extant (currently used) bi-nomial scientific name, Genus, Family, Order, Common or vulgar English name e.g., 'heron,' bird of prey,' 'raptor,' *etc.* However common names e.g., 'Little Egret,' 'Tawny Eagle,' *etc.*, are generally not indexed.
- c. Biological characteristics of birds e.g., breeding, feeding, display, behaviour, preening, *etc.* These words are prefixed with the word '**Biology**' for convenience. Searching such keywords will require entering the following on the Search page: **K= "BIOLOGY : BREEDING"**, *etc.*
- d. Ornithological subjects resulting from the study of birds e.g., 'birdwatching,' 'checklist,' 'ring recoveries,' 'collection,' 'catalogues,' *etc.* These words are prefixed with the word '**Ornithology**' for convenience. Searching such keywords will require entering the following on the Search page: **K= "ORNITHOLOGY : BIRD HITS"**, *etc.*
- e. Ornithologists. These words are prefixed with the word '**Ornithologist**' for convenience. Searching such keywords will require entering the following on the Search page: **K= "ORNITHOLOGIST : ALI, SALIM"**, *etc.*

### 6. Shortcuts.

- a. When searching, type the first few letters of a word [e.g., **ACROC**] and press **F2** on your keyboard for a drop-down list of words beginning with the letters you typed (**ACROC**).



Select your preference by scrolling to or clicking on it and the entire word will automatically appear as your search string.

- b. You can do a random search using '\*' appended at the end of your search string, eg., k="OENANTHE\*". This will list all keywords beginning with the genus *Oenanthe* (including *Oenanthe*).
- c. When searching for keywords with the prefix BIOLOGY, ORNITHOLOGY or ORNITHOLOGIST, type the prefix entirely immediately followed by the first two or three letters of the word you are searching e.g., k=BIOLOGYBR, for biology : breeding. Then press the F2 key for the drop down menu. Similarly, k=ORNITHOLOGYBIRD or k=ORNITHOLOGISTALI.

## 7. Cautionary Notes.

- a. This database does not purport to be a *complete* bibliography of Ornithological literature for the geographical area mentioned above (3a).
- b. All possible care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of information. But the fine-tuning of such a database is a continuous process given the vast range of material covered and the generally inaccessible nature of much ornithological literature, especially that from the last Century. Errors also occur, as the source of many references is second-hand in nature—having been added from the reference sections of various papers, books, *etc.*, where they may be wrongly printed.
- c. Selection of Keywords is a highly personal affair when one gets down to specifics. Something akin to one man's keyword being another's nightmare. I have tried to select keywords that are generally broad-based, though not always successfully. Please keep this in mind when using the bibliography. Feel your way around to familiarize yourself with them. You will only become a more skillful operator of Papyrus Retriever<sup>TM</sup>.
- d. Often, a single reference has many keywords including various places (sites), species and, aspects of their biology, as well as subjects listed under 'ornithology'. For example, if a detailed search is done for the following keywords, "Corvus splendens," "Biology : Breeding," and "New Delhi" — you would get a list of references. Some of these might not be relevant to your specific search, since "Biology : Breeding" may relate to a species other than the one you are looking for, but which is also listed as a relevant keyword for a reference. Similarly, the keyword "New Delhi" might refer to another species mentioned in the same reference, too.
- e. It is suggested that searches with multiple Keywords be used with caution as well as intelligence. Try simple searches initially till you gain confidence and then proceed gradually towards more complex searches.
- f. Each country included in this database has its name included as a Keyword in every pertinent reference. Except India. A Search for say, Sri Lanka, will get you a list of all the references pertaining to Sri Lanka, on this database. Not so for India. For India, importance has been given to its political states. Thus a Search for Rajasthan will list all references pertaining to that state.

## 8. How you can help.

- a. A work of this nature, as stated above, can never be complete. It is an ongoing project that requires constant fine-tuning and adding-to, only possible by the active cooperation of many alert users.
- b. Please send typos, additions / corrections by email or mail—to the addresses given above.
- c. The easiest way would be by quoting the Reference Number (at the top of each reference) and then saying e.g., "Add/delete keywords..." or "Make the following corrections in text," *etc.*, for existing references.
- d. For a reference not on the database, please send references in the following format. "Full name of author/s (Year): Full title. Full title of Journal. Volume No. Issue No. Page number from—to." The reference/s you send should be transcribed verbatim including punctuation, capitalization, italics, etc. You could also suggest keywords for indexing.

e. Every single *accurate* contribution will improve and enhance the database.

*There is one final request I would like to make. This database is the work of nearly 20 years and is offered in its present, open form, in total faith and confidence of the user's integrity. Please do not fritter away my effort by making copies for friends. Urge them to buy one instead. Support all effort towards conservation. Thank you for your support.*

<sup>1</sup> "PAPYRUS" and "Research Software Design" are trademarks of Research Software Design.

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